BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL WORK

CAUSES OF MARITAL MALADJUSTMENT IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN HOMES

A Thesis

Submitted by

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(A.B., Hastings College, 1932)

In partial fulfillment of requirements

for the degree of Master of Social Service

1935

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PREFACE

This particular subject was chosen for the thesis because of the apparent increase and prevalence of marital maladjustment in America to-day. The disintegration of the family and the changing status of the marriage relationship are subjects of wide concern.

In making such a study the writer had a desire to acquire more information as to the causes of marital maladjustment and was hopeful that such information would enable her to interpret and understand better the problems which many people are facing.

The writer recognizes that the subject chosen was far too inclusive to be handled satisfactorily in this length paper. It would have been much better to have made a more thorough study of one or two causes of maladjustment.

The information used in the preparation of this paper has come from a number of sources. There is an extensive amount of material published in this field, and consequently it was difficult to present it at all adequately in so brief a study. Such material can easily be opinionated and prejudiced so the writer has attempted to give the views of various authorities presenting different sides of the problems.

The writer wishes to express her grateful appreciation to Dr. Charles R. Zahniser and to Professor David D. Vaughan - teachers, friends, and counselors - for the influence they have had in this year's work and for their helpfulness in the preparation of this thesis.

J. H. G.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

Chapter I

PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

Society's Purpose for Marriage

The terms marriage and family are used with various connotations. To avoid misunderstanding it is necessary to interpret these terms as used in this study of marital maladjustment. Marriage and family suggest different kinds of experience, and it is possible to have one without the other. Both are generally used to mean a social institution. Nevertheless they are intimately connected, and it may be said that marriage is rooted in the family rather than the family in marriage. Illustrating this is the fact that among many peoples true married life does not begin for persons who are formally married or betrothed, or a marriage does not become definite, until a child is born or there are signs of pregnancy; while in other cases sexual relations which happen to lead to pregnancy or the birth of a child are, as a rule, followed by marriage or make marriage compulsory.

However, among us today neither the expression of sex nor reproduction is limited to relations of marriage although it influences both of these activities and offers, in part, a solution of problems found in sex and reproduction. But with us marriage involves more than this. It is more than a

substitution on a higher level of the animal instinct for sex or reproduction. It provides an opportunity for realizations, irritations, disappointments, and satisfactions that are wholly human.

As an institution marriage may be said to be, in the monogamous state, the relation of a man and a woman which is recognized by custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both on the part of the couple entering the union and on the part of the children born into it.

The term family, as customarily used, implies not merely mates but parents and children. In this sense children created the family; the family did not create the children.

In this study the family will be considered only indirectly and in so far as it affects the marital maladjustment in the marriage relationship.

In an attempt to discover the causes of maladjustment in marriage, the purpose of marriage must be considered from the point of view both of society and of the individual's conception of the motives of marriage; for in so far as the motives or purpose of this relationship are frustrated, to that extent will there be maladjustment.

Perpetuation of the Race. Society has three main purposes in which it is served by the institution of marriage. The first of these is the fulfillment of marriage in the family which would mean the perpetuation of the race. Society is primarily interested in its own perpetuation; for suicide is

as abnormal for the race (society) as for the individual. In order that society may continue it is necessary that its constituent members should be replaced as they are eliminated. Statisticians have shown that to keep a population stationary in numbers without providing for any increase it is necessary, on the average, for each marriage to result in a family with about four children.

As far as reproduction is concerned marriage is not a required institution, but it is surely true that in the long history of the race it is the most satisfactory institution thus far evolved to care for the reproduction and survival of society. It might be added at this point that the group expects marriage to result in a family in which the children will be cared for and protected.

Happiness of the Individual. A second reason for the fostering of marriage by society is the contribution it makes to the happiness of the individual. It is not difficult to see how an institution that is a means of giving satisfaction and happiness to individuals will at the same time contribute to the well-being of society as a whole. Of course these individual satisfactions must be of such a kind that they will not only realize the maximum personal happiness, but at the same time will not interfere with collective interests.

Since marriage is one of the means of satisfying human desires and thus of adjusting and stabilizing the individual, society has maintained it because in this way it contributes

to the satisfactory functioning and progress of the social order.

Preservation of the Social Heritage and Other Contributions. Likewise, marriage which normally results in the family, functions for society in that it is a means for conservation and transference of the social heritage from one generation to another. If each generation had to acquire anew the institutions, customs, skills, learning, and culture of the race found in the social heritage, there could be no social progress, although there might be biological progress.

Even though it is now generally recognized that this transmitting of the social heritage has been passed on largely to other groups, in the great majority of cases the family influences the child more than any one other institution or group. In this role the family has a unique place, for during the first years of the child's life, it is practically the only source for the transfer of the social heritage; and even after the child begins to be influenced by other institutions, the family continues to bear an especially close relationship to the child. Thus the family is a socializing, humanizing, and personalizing force in society.

Marriage has also served society in that it has furnished a convenient means by which property could be transferred.

Individual's Motives For Marriage

The individual's motives for marriage are varied and the combination of motives which leads individuals into the relationship are almost as numerous as those who marry. The

motives that lead into marriage are very concrete. It undoubtedly would be very interesting and startling if it were possible to discover the expectations of the man and woman in each union. Such a revelation would disclose the very basis of many of the difficulties, incompatibilities, disillusionments and estrangements in marriage. An exposure of these expectations would show the great difference of emphasis that still exists and often the great dissimilarity in the ideals of the man and woman.

The significance of marriage as a means of personal satisfaction reveals largely not only the customary standards of a national group or a sectional culture but also the cultural level of the individual. Likewise the individual's expectations of marriage, whether conscious or not, reveal not only influence of his present social environment but also the happenings of his earlier life that have made his personality what it is.

Motives which lead the individual into participation in marriage are sometimes a source of conflict in relation to society's purposes and may even be antagonistic to them.

Marriage now, as always, so far as the individuals who enter it are concerned, is started with expectations. These ideas as to what members hope to get from marriage are often vague and frequently smothered by the strength of impulses that do not allow the individuals to form clear ideas as to what marriage must mean to them to be successful. Although

most of the desires that will begin to reveal themselves later in the relationship may at first be concealed by the strength of sex, they soon appear when this living in daily association is well established.

We may consider briefly these motives in relation to William I. Thomas' human wishes. He interprets human behavior through wishes which he considers the forces which impel to action. These wishes he classifies as: 1. Desire for new experience, 2. Desire for security, 3. Desire for response, 4. Desire for recognition. He assumes that the manner in which each wish is fulfilled will vary with the individual. For example, one may, at least partially, satisfy the desire for new experiences in novels, theatres, or motion pictures; another in a sport, in gambling, or in a fight; and yet another in science or in invention. In the same way, the fulfillment of the other three wishes will be manifested in varied ways depending upon the personality.

It may be seen from this brief account that these four human wishes may be vital factors in the motives leading into marriage. Any wish in this connection may be accompanied and qualified by one or all of the other wishes. One person may attach most importance to the desire for response, while others may, in varying degrees and combinations, stress the other wishes.

Groves points out that marriage adapts itself to social conditions, and in any past period as well as at the present

time there is a great diversity of development between different groups.[1] Also among individuals, as soon as the cultural level reaches the point where any degree of individuality is possible, there is variation of motives for marriage. The motives that lead men and women into marriage today are often more characteristic of those predominating in a former period than they are in accord with those usually accepted today.

Müller-Lyer[2] consider interests that cluster about a love need, the production of offspring, and the mutual helpfulness of husband and wife as the three important motives that have always drawn people into marriage. During the three epochs in the history of man these urges are expressed in different proportions.

In the first, or primitive period, the motives ranked in the order of economic advantage, children, and love. Love took a simple form and was satisfied outside of marriage.

In the second period, or early stage of civilization, these urges in order of importance were: children, economic advantage, love. Property had come to have importance and was passed on by inheritance from parent to child; therefore the strongest motive for marrying was the desire for heirs.

The third epoch, or modern civilization, brought about a change in the ranking of the motives to love, children,

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1. Marriage, p. 31 ff.
2. Groves, Marriage, p. 31, taken from Müller-Lyer, Evolution of Modern Marriage

economic advantage. There are many reasons for this change, but among the obvious ones are: child labor is no longer profitable; the sterile woman is not now disgraced; and economically marriage is not the necessity it once was. Now marriage is chosen primarily for love response.

This classification of the motives must be regarded as very elastic, for even in contemporary America we find groups and sections where the need of economic coöperation often rivals love as a motive.

Affection. Nevertheless, the very nature of our modern culture is bringing about a greater emphasis on affection as a motive. The term itself, in its fullness of meaning, is modern. A desire for expression through affection is fundamental in human nature. Thomas maintains that, "The desire for re-

> sponse-----is primarily related to the instinct of love, and shows itself in the tendency to seek and to give signs of appreciation in connection with other individuals." 1.

There is little question that the motives for marrying are growing fewer in our modernized world, but along with this decrease the significance of affection becomes more prominent and there are those who prophesy that it will become the dominant urge of marriage. If this be true, there could scarcely be a better support for marriage and the family.

It is true that marriage based primarily on affection places greater demands upon individual character than is

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1. Reuter and Runner, The Family, p. 252

necessary when the emphasis is placed on other motives, for example, the motive of economic advantage. Nevertheless, love is fundamental and is found in all classes and in all ranges of intellectual training; and where it is present between a man and a woman, it furnishes the supreme incentive for a life partnership.

Physical passion by itself may easily be mistaken for affection. Sometimes passion-alliances have, to begin with, the rudiments of affection; but progress in growth in the relationship does not follow because physical attraction itself cannot meet the test of time where character is meager.

It is because of its unusual quality of going forward into new levels that affection has become in modern times the commanding motive of matrimony. Not only does it offer the individual man and woman a type of experience that cannot be exhausted, but it acts as a centralizing motive for other matrimonial interests. It has come to be not only the most deeply motivating of the matrimonial interests, but also one that is able to withstand the wear and tear of the matrimonial experience. Since it seems to have in largest measure the quality of wearability, affection has come to be regarded as the essential element of a genuine marriage.

Sex Desire. Another important motive for marriage is sex. Sex reaches into and colors every facet of human life. To such an extent is this true that an outstanding school of modern psychology, the Freudian, makes it the basis of all human

behavior. Little wonder that it has a profound interest for students of human nature.

Sex has had so large a place as a motive leading into marriage that there are many who are content to think only of this incentive to marry and who regard the family as chiefly the product of society's regulation of the sex cravings of men and women. Even among authorities there are those who consider one of the most important functions of marriage the regulation and legalizing of sex relationship. "It is human to desire

> sex satisfaction, and what we now know as conventional marriage has been developed by social experience to provide satisfaction for one of the strongest and most characteristic of all human cravings. It is true that what was originally instinct, simple and meager, has been greatly elaborated and refined so that----the hunger of most men and most women includes much more than mere erotic satisfaction. It still remains true, however, that these accumulations that have been built into human passion have not in any degree eliminated the need of physical satisfaction." 1.

It is true that sex experience is not always kept within the family circle, and there is a possibility in our modern life that those who once would have been driven into matrimony primarily by the sex impulse will make an effort to find means of satisfaction that do not involve commitment to a permanent relationship. However, there is a vital difference between sex experience apart from affection and that incorporated into love. Marriage consolidates sex and makes it a constituent of affection. It is an impossibility for the participants in

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1. Groves, Ernest: Marriage, p. 263

an illicit relationship to obtain the satisfaction that the married enjoy; for the sex experience in marriage is an opportunity of expressing intense affection without the incumbent worries necessarily attached to unorthodox relationships.

For most individuals marriage offers the most satisfactory and most normal expression of this vehement drive; but when this drive becomes an end in itself, marriage entails an abnormal degree of hazard. As an impulse sex is notoriously unsteady and when separated from other ideally recognized motivating attractions, as affection, parenthood, and comradeship, it is tyrannous and debasing and undermines rather than establishes a permanent relationship between a man and a woman; but if used to serve, it is one of the loftiest and most ennobling forces in human life.

Children. The desire for children is a motive for marriage. There are many who do not recognize this as an immediate motive for marriage although they expect the relationship to result in the coming of children. This desire is closely related with others, as affection, completion of life, and sex. In this desire to reproduce one or more of Thomas' four wishes may be satisfied; desire for new experience, desire for security, desire for response, desire for recognition.

One authority expresses the strength of this desire as follows: "The normal human being who is aware of his needs will find that nothing in his life is so deep as his desire for children. To suppose that this is true only of women is to go counter to the facts. To say that the craving for children is not

> intense is to overlook the fact that even among animals offspring take precedence over everything else during the period of helplessness of the young and that as we go higher in life the imagination is able to forecast the intense emotion of parenthood before they are awakened by the arrival of children so that human beings do not merely respond to the needs of existent offspring, but consciously desire to produce their young." 1.

For some this motive is evidenced in the desire for an heir to carry on the family name or to inherit property or to fulfill a felt human need. For others it may be stimulated by a feeling of obligation to society to reproduce. But it must be recognized that the parental desire or instinct is much more deeply rooted in some than in others.

Of course there is the possibility of having children outside the marriage bond, but the complications which this entails place it at a disadvantage.

Comradeship. Another motive for marriage and one that is closely associated with those already considered - affection, sex, and children - is that of comradeship or fellowship. This fellowship is a fulfillment of a normal human need. Most men and women have a craving for an unlimited and a permanent fellowship, a craving satisfied most completely with a member of the opposite sex and in the marriage relationship.

There are qualities in the marriage comradeship which make it stand out as different from other relationships. It is more apt than any other to be a sincere and frank

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1. Groves, Ernest, S.P.F., p. 62

comradeship. It offers an opportunity for frankness and honesty beyond any other relationship because the husband and wife are both in so intimate an association that it is for the interest of each to be frank with the other. It also differs because the expression of sex adds a unique meaning to the fellowship.

It is this motive of comradeship, along with those of affection and sex, that have been strongest in the forming of the "arrested" or companionate form of marriage.

Economic Security. In the past the economic motive was definitely recognized as being inductive to marriage. There have been exceptions; but for the most part in every period of American life it has been economically an advantage to both sexes to marry. This was obviously true when the home served to a much greater degree than now as a unit of production. There was a time when there was no alternative; marriage was practically imperative. In the agricultural period of our history marriage offered about the only solution to the problem of life adjustment for economically there was no other way out. The same is true in many agricultural districts today.

For many of us it is easy to assume that in the United States today marriage is contracted almost entirely on the basis of affection, but we must take heed of Elmer's suggestion that, "When we say that family life is changing from a status where biological convenience and economic necessity are the predominating factors, we must recognize that it is still far from being universal.

At best it is still only a general attitude which we wish to see become more universal." 1.

"It is not unusual to find the accepted attitude regarding marriage to be chiefly a consideration of the economic advantages accruing therefrom. This is especially true when the struggle of making a livelihood is particularly difficult. With the opportunities offered to girls limited, the parents tend to feel somewhat ill at ease until the future economic well-being of their daughters is settled. Likewise the marriage of a son is evaluated more in terms of its economic advantages or disadvantages than of the factors which are less observable." 2.

Most of us will a gree that it is not uncommon to hear a conversation similar to the following: "'Where is Alice now?' 'Oh, she is married and living in Detroit. She married a doctor by the name of Smith. They say he has a big practice. She did well.' Or, 'Do you remember Edith? She was such a sweet girl. She married a man by the name of Walker. They say he is a nice fellow and a good architect, but he is a poor business man. It's too bad for her. She could have done so much better. She was always so particular. You know Black, who owns that big jewelry store, was wild about her, but she turned him down, just because she didn't like him. Now see where he is.'" 3.

For a number of people, especially those living in an urban environment, the economic appeal of marriage no longer exists. Indeed, for a surprising proportion marriage is becoming more and more a financial luxury rather than a necessity. There are many unmarried couples who are facing the fact that marriage will decrease the income or at least jeopardize part of it. For thousands the question, "Dare we marry and accept

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1. Elmer, Manuel C.: Family Adjustment and Change, p. 239
2. Ibid, p. 237, 238
3. Ibid, p. 238

the economic risk that comes with matrimony?"[1]. is a tragic reality. This economic pressure which means postponement of marriage is a seed which is producing serious problems in our social life.

Completion of Life. The completion of life as an incentive for marriage is inseparably allied with those previously discussed, with possibly one exception, that of economic security. There is a complementary character of the sexes which makes it impossible for one to live a complete life without the other. Each needs the other. This complementary relationship of man and woman has been recognized in all serious literature relating to marriage from even the time of Plato. It was he who once said man and woman were two parts of a whole that had been severed and each hunted to find the other half that they might have a complete life. [2].

Complementary characteristics which belong to the normal man or woman permeate his whole personality and seek fulfillment in the association with another individual who will bring completeness to the life which alone could be lived only partially. This supplementing nature of marriage occurs ideally in all phases of life, - the physical, intellectual, and spiritual.

Through daily association marriage offers an opportunity of seeing life through theeyes of another person. It not only

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1. Groves, E. R.: Marriage, p. 5
2. Groves, E. R.: Social Problems of the Family, p. 61

offers this but it also permits combining the frank views of members of both sexes.

Marriage, likewise, gives the most satisfactory means in our society of biological completion of life. The life cycle may be completed through the coming and rearing of children.

It is in marriage that the personality can be developed most comprehensively and most wholesomely. The personality of each partner in an ideal relationship is ennobled and enlarged by the personality of the other. It must be frankly admitted that some marriages can never develop and bring to fulfillment this complementary character of the two sexes. There are unions in which the individuals for many reasons may not possess the requisite characteristics to enable the relationship to lead to a completion of life.

> Romantic Complex. "The 'Romantic Complex' may be defined as that complex of attitudes and sentiments which regards the marriage relation as one exclusively of response. This romantic attitude pictures the marriage relationship in terms of love - sexual attraction in a large part - and sets up a standard according to which success in marriage is measured by the satisfaction of a highly idealized desire for response." 1.

It is necessary to explain that romantic love is not used here in its popular meaning. Here romantic love and affection are referred to as separate emotions. They are closely associated but romantic love designates a more illusive and transitory emotion than that of deep affection. It embodies a tendency to view realism through rose-colored glasses. True

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1. Mowrer, Ernest R.: Family Disorganization, p. 160

affection is more stable and is more apt to endure in facing realities. Romantic love may develop into lasting affection or the infatuation may subside and die within a few weeks or months.

This romantic idea of marriage is but one aspect of a widespread romantic outlook upon life which is characteristic of America. In the past it has been the exception rather than the rule to associate the romantic impulse and marriage. In Europe it was considered wise to keep separate romance from marriage because of a consideration of family interests. It is in the United States that romantic love as the prologue and theme of marriage has been most outstandingly demonstrated.

The romantic motive toward marriage is an impelling one held by the majority of those who enter matrimony. It is characterized by the beliefs that: 1. in marriage will be found the only true happiness, 2, affinities are ideal love relations, 3. each may find an ideal mate, 4. there is only one, 5. this one will be immediately recognized when met, that is, through love at first sight.[1.]

A marriage contracted with the romantic motive as the only basis may develop into a stable, sound relationship; but with this as the driving incentive, especially where the union has been entered hurriedly, the relationship rests on a sandy

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1. Mowrer, Family Disorganization, p. 160

foundation. Evidence of the failure of such unions is common in our daily newspapers.

Other Motives. There are numerous other incentives for marriage; one man may consider marriage as a solution of his search for a satisfactory housekeeper; another feels it will give him more prestige as a citizen; a third finds it a way of protecting himself from gossip in his profession; and still another may use it as an easy way to acquire domination or to escape monotony.

The desire for social prestige may impel some to enter the relationship. This social pressure probably has more to do with the entry of many into marriage than most are willing to acknowledge. Many a young woman feels she is disgraced if she cannot achieve matrimony. The following excerpt expresses this attitude:

> "I want to marry because the married woman has a different social status from the single woman. Marriage puts a halo around the mother's head, but it has only a dunce cap for the old maids.
>
> I want to marry because the single girl is either politely ignored or rudely ridiculed by thoughtless people." 1.

Another reason for marrying is that of "escape." This is especially true of girls, hundreds of whom marry in an effort to escape a crowded home, a nagging mother, a drunken father, or a hum-drum life with all their earnings appropriated by their parents. There are young men who marry for similar

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1. Dorothy Dix Column: Boston Globe, 2/27/35

reasons although perhaps not so frequently as the young women. There are widows who marry to escape the rigors of a difficult economic status.

In some social circles parents all but force their children into marriage. Many a girl has had to face the determination of her parents that she must marry "somebody" soon.

As was said before, motives and combinations of motives vary with each individual who enters matrimony; but whatever the individual's incentives may be, upon the extent to which he is able to achieve his objectives depends largely the success of his marriage.

CHAPTER II

MANIFESTATIONS OF MARITAL MALADJUSTMENT

Chapter II

MANIFESTATIONS OF MARITAL MALADJUSTMENT

Disintegration and Disorganization

Manifestations of marital maladjustment are found in processes, discord and tensions, and what are here termed external evidences, that is, separation mutually agreed upon, non-support, desertion, and divorce.

Disintegration is a sociological concept which refers to "the loss of family consciousness, that is, a disintegration of the familial attitudes which make up the family complex." [1] External evidences of maladjustment, as divorce and desertion, are but forms of family disintegration.

Marriage disintegration is the finale to a series of developments in which conflict over-balances accommodation in the relations between husband and wife.

Disorganization is a process which, if permitted to run its full course, results in disintegration.

In the organization of the family there occurs a formation of organized attitudes in which all members of the family take part and acquiesce. In the disorganization the process

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1. Mowrer, Ernest R., Family, Vol. 8, p. 83, 85-87, May, 1927 Reprinted Reuter and Runner, The Family, p. 481

is just the reverse for the family complex is broken up and the attitudes and ambitions of the family become differentiated.

Thus, so far as it concerns the marital relationship disorganization may be defined "as that series of events which tends to terminate in the disruption of the marriage union. It is--the individualization of behavior in marriage relations, as contrasted with family organization, which is the tendency toward identification of behavior in those relations." 1.

Reuter and Runner point out that family disorganization is a natural and inevitable consequence of a changing social order. The institution itself is of value only in so far as it meets human needs. These needs remain practically the same; but since the social order changes, the institution must adapt itself to the changing order. However, institutions change slowly and therefore usually "lag" in their adaptation to the changing social order. Personal demoralization and family failures are manifestations and results of the inadequacy of the traditional family.

Domestic Discord and Tensions

The term "domestic discord" is one commonly applied to a conflict between husband and wife. It is the causes of this discord which shall be treated more in detail in subsequent chapters. For the present, tensions which are causes of maladjustments will be considered briefly.

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1. Mowrer, Ernest R., The Family, p. 174

Sociologically a tension is a conflict situation which breeds certain attitudes between persons in the groups. Several authorities have attempted to classify the tensions so that they might be more useful in diagnosis. Meroney suggests four with various subheads: economic factors, health factors, personal factors, social factors. [1.] Kreuger classifies thirteen tensions: economic, occupation, response (sex), control (positional relationship of members to each other), status (positional relationship of the family in social participation), culture, philosophy of life, temperament, health, individual capacities and abilities, appetites and habits, personal behavior pattern, and age.[2.] Burgess gives seven tensions in his classification: economic, sex, health, respect, cultural, temperament, and pattern of life. Mowrer gives four general types: incompatibility in response, economic individualization, cultural differentiation, and individualization of life-pattern.

However, no matter which classification is chosen as a basis of diagnosis, it is very improbable that the maladjustment is caused by any one tension, for the tensions are closely interrelated and do not operate in isolation. For example,

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1. Mowrer, Ernest R., Family Disorganization, p. 195-196
   Reprinted from Meroney, The Town Church and the Modern Family, p. 77
2. Reuter and Runner, The Family, p. 492, reprinted from
   Krueger, E.T., A Study of Marriage Incompatibility, Family, Vol. 9, pp. 53-60, April, 1928

an economic tension may involve other tensions, as individual capacities and abilities, cultural differentiation, health and temperament. Often the most obvious tension is merely sequential in character, and thus the basic difficulty lies elsewhere.

The causes of the tensions may be present at the time of marriage or they may develop later. They may grow rapidly or may develop slowly and insidiously for years.

External Evidences

There are many manifestations of marital discord which are kept concealed within the family bounds. Incompatibilities, unfaithfullness, and the like are usually guarded as a part of the private life of husband and wife. However, if the discord develops to the place where disorganization is occurring or has even been completed and the relationship has disintegrated, then there are bound to be external evidences, such as separation, desertion, non-support, or divorce.

Separation. Separation indicates the couple lives apart by prearrangement. In such cases they are unwilling to continue living together but for various reasons one or both of them object to divorce or there may be no legal ground for divorce. The objections to a divorce include religious, moral social, professional, and financial reasons. However, the fact that they no longer live together does not change their marital status, nor, usually, does it influence their legal rights or duties.

Non-Support. Non-support is the term which designates a case in which the husband fails to support his family, whether he continues to live at home or leaves, his destination being known.

Desertion. Desertion generally refers to the husband or wife's leaving home without giving any information as to his or her destination. However, it is often used to include all cases in which legal action is necessary to re-establish or to prevent the discontinuance of certain family relations, usually economic family support.

Desertion is frequently described as "the poor man's divorce." Desertion characterizes the poverty group while divorce is more frequent among the middle and upper classes. This implies that the motives for divorce and desertion are fundamentally the same. It is assumed that the causes of family disintegration are practically the same in the two population groups, except poverty is a greater factor in desertion than in divorce.

Desertion offers a simple means of getting away from unpleasant situations. It usually occurs among those whose work is unskilled or irregular. Those with a trade or profession or steady employment cannot afford to desert. Investigations of deserters show that about 87% desert more than once. There are but a few first-time deserters who are never heard of again, and but a comparatively small number settle down and have families in other places. Most first-time desertions are during the first five years of marriage.

Earl E. Eubank in his study of desertion explains in three ways why the poorer classes resort to desertion rather than divorce: (1) the expense, (2) the prohibition of the Roman Catholic Church which is especially influential among the cities' mass of poor, and (3) an ignorance of the procedure necessary to obtain a divorce, along with a suspicion of courts and officers. He also points out that desertion with its lack of expense and ease of accomplishment brings about the desired results as effectively as divorce. At the same time there is not the finality in desertion that characterizes divorce. Also, especially among the immigrant population of the cities, there is no social stigma attached to desertion.[1.]

The causes of desertion are as difficult and as complex a problem as the causes of marital unhappiness generally. This is evidenced in the causes of desertion given by Joanna C. Colcord in her study of the broken home. Her list includes: mental deficiency, faults in early training, differences in background, wrong basis of marriage, lack of education, occupational faults, wanderlust, money trouble, ill health, temperamental incompatibility, sex incompatibility, vicious habits, interference of relatives, racial attitudes toward marriage, community standards, lack of proper recreation, influence of companions, and expectation of charitable relief.[2.]

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1. Eubank, Earl E., A Study of Family Desertion, p. 19
2. Colcord, Joanna C., Broken Homes, p. 201-203

With the exception of the last cause, this list of the causes for desertion is very similar to many lists given for causes of domestic discord and divorce.

Divorce. Divorce is the legal recognition that the family has disintegrated. It is an effect, not a cause; it is a symptom, not the disease. A divorce occurs when every other marriage tie has been severed. Usually divorce is resorted to only after the marriage has been completely wrecked - sometimes not until many years after. It is then occurs the readjustment of the legal status of persons formerly married but between whom marital relations have ceased to exist. Divorce is, in effect, the annulment of the legal bond upon proof that the marriage as such has been dissolved. It is obvious therefore that divorce is not synonymous with marriage breakdown.

Legal and Natural Causes

As a justification for this legal dissolution of marriage, it is necessary for the state to provide causes for the granting of divorces. These legal causes vary among the states, from South Carolina which will grant no divorces and New York which grants divorces for adultery only, to states which grant divorces for as many as eleven causes. However, investigations have shown that the legal causes are in reality not the causes for the breaking of the relationship.

One such investigation was made of 1000 certificates of evidence in cases tried in the Circuit Court of Cook County,

Illinois. The records were taken from the files in chronological order. The divorces were granted for the following legal causes given in the order of frequency: desertion, cruelty, adultery, drunkenness, bigamy, conviction of felony, infancy, insanity or intoxication, impotency, and first cousins.

Of these thousand cases, 497 were granted for desertion. Of these 497 there were 295 which contained evidences in the court record which suggested other causes than the legal. Of these 295 cases, the study revealed the following were the apparent natural causes in the order of frequency: financial tension, desertion for another, dissatisfaction with home or married life, infidelity, drink and cruelty, refusal to leave old home, irregular habits, irregular work and drink, and forced marriage.

Of the 265 granted for cruelty, 156 had evidence in the record of the real causes. These apparent natural causes were: financial tension, drink, jealousy, infidelity, etc., excessive and unnatural sexual intercourse, and irregular habits.

In those granted for adultery the apparent natural causes, where they could be ascertained, were: illicit intercourse, living with another spouse, and venereal infection.

From this it is evident that the causes listed in the divorce records are merely reported causes; for the cause reported must be one admitted by the state law as grounds for divorce. This study likewise demonstrates that legal causes

are "blanket" terms. For example, financial tension apparently was the natural cause in the majority of cases granted for desertion and for cruelty.

It is easy to see that a number of causes may be forced into the legal categories. Moreover, the reported causes which apparently are true may be only the inciting cause; the fundamental underlying cause may be quite different. Then there are situations in which the husband and wife protect their future by having the complaining party charge a less severe cause for divorce than what both know to be the real reason.

New York State affords many cases where it was necessary to force the real causes into legal categories, for this state has legally only one cause, that of adultery. An illustration of this - and one which happens frequently - is that of an arrangement for the husband to be "discovered" with a woman of ill-fame or otherwise in order to meet the legal requirements.

Thus it is apparent that there is great variance between the legal and the natural causes for the dissolution of marriage through divorce. The real "evils" are those which destroy marriage and not the legal recognition of the dissolution.

Increase in Divorce

The increase of divorce is common knowledge. This may indicate several things. It may mean that there has been a change in attitudes toward divorce with a corresponding lessening of social disapproval or it may mean

an increase in the facilities for divorce. Just because divorces were less frequent fifty years ago is no reason to believe that domestic discord was correspondingly less. A larger proportion than formerly may solve their problems by divorce.

It is usually unwise to illustrate with statistics unless these statistics can be interpreted fully. This is particularly true of those which have to do with social trends because of the many factors affecting the statistical conclusions. Although there are many factors which must be taken into consideration in interpreting these statistics, we shall give the following merely to supply some indication of the rate of increase of divorce: In 1887 there were 0.47 divorces to every 1,000 population and 5.5. divorces to every 100 marriages performed. In 1928 there were 1.63 divorces for every 1,000 population and 16.6 divorces for every 100 marriages performed. These figures seem to indicate a hopeless situation, but as stated before, there are various conditions of which cognizance must be taken. For example, during the height of our immigration there were many cases of immigrants arriving without their families. As a result of this many divorces were granted. Then also the last forty years has been a period in which freedom and individualism have grown, public attitude toward divorce has changed, and a greater number of causes for divorce have been recognized.

Again, the mere fact that the divorce rate is lower in a particular section or locality does not indicate that family disintegration is less there. The absence of a divorce law does not mean family disintegration does not exist in South Carolina, but that it must take some other form.

PART II

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

CHAPTER III

NEW FREEDOM

Chapter III

NEW FREEDOM

Diminishing Primary Group Controls

In this and in the following chapter will be considered those factors which are characteristic of our society as a whole to-day and which seem to affect the individual and thus, in turn, the marital conditions in our social group. These factors, which are characteristic of the spirit of the day are here referred to as external influences in order to differentiate from the internal influences or from those which have to do especially with individual conditions and problems.

One of these external influences, evidence of which is to be seen on every side, is the diminishing control of the primary group. Professor Cooley was the originator of the term, "primary group." He defines primary groups as "those

> characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation. They are primary in several senses, but chiefly in that they are fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual. 1.

In the simpler social milieu of the past, the local community or primary group played a dominating role in the life

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P.: Divorce, p. 309

of the individual. The affairs of the individual were known to all the members of the group. Any deviation from the usual was looked upon with disapproval; gossip and public opinion acted as powerful controls in holding the individual in conformance with group ideals and in hampering his initiative and freedom. Of course this limiting of the individual's development was not conscious on the part of the group nor was it recognized as such on the part of the individual.

The industrialization of our society has in the majority of instances resulted in a disintegration of communities and a reorganization of social control on a more impersonal and indirect basis. In regard to this Professor Cooley says:

> "In our own life the intimacy of the neighborhood has been broken up by the growth of an intricate mesh of wider contacts which leaves us strangers to people who live in the same house." 1.

The urbanization of our life is increasing its mobility. The individual's contacts are multiplied in number, but at the same time become casual and specialized. There is everywhere this tendency to increase the secondary contacts and diminish the primary. Until a comparatively short time ago the family had managed to adjust itself fairly well to an agricultural life. The individual was controlled by the church, the community, and other members of the family.

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P.: Divorce, p. 310

Professor Calhoun comments on these changes as follows:

> "In the old rural society, customs reigned. It was custom to live with one's wife; it was custom for the wife to be submissive and for the husband's authority to overrule incompatibility. Moreover, when people usually spent their entire lives at the place of their birth, the sentiment of their neighbors acted with telling force. A man that formally broke up his family or a woman that formally deserted her husband had to take into account the antagonism of the neighborhood and the bitterness of its frown. City life is a great solvent of custom; neighbors do not know each other or if they do, they are tolerant, or the problem may be solved by moving." 1.

There is little question as to the value of changes which result in expanding life and throwing off restraints which stunt the growth of the personality. The danger lies in an undisciplined freedom which does not recognize the rights of others or the interests of society as a whole. Whatever the results of diminishing primary control there is little doubt but that this has been effective in making people less hesitant to endure intolerable or unhappy marital conditions.

The Liberal Movement

One of the most significant phases of our modern life is the liberal movement or liberalism although, within the last months, there appears to be a tendency toward reaction, at least politically. This liberalism of the individual includes his relations not only in regard to the state but also to all other influences in society. According to Lichtenberger this movement "which has been an outgrowth of the revolutionary

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1. Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 310

> changes in the industrial and political organization of society in the last century and a half, was the product in the main of the increasing mobility of the individual under the new conditions." 1.

This liberalism has had inestimable results. It has penetrated into every phase of our American life. All institutions have felt its impact, marriage as well as others. There has been a tendency to criticize institutions on the basis of utilitarianism; social forms do not exist for themselves but for the benefit of the individual. They are therefore held to an accountability for the performance of their functions; and if they fail in this performance, there is little hesitancy to demand a change, although the adjustment takes time.

Marriage, along with other institutions, is being scrutinized. There is a demand that it serve its purpose or change.

American Individualism. What is commonly known as individualism has been accepted in the political, economic, and social relations more slowly than the others. The free exercise of personal initiative within reasonable bounds has become the expected prerogative of the individual.

Individualism undoubtedly received its greatest impetus in America in the pioneer period. At this period every man was given the opportunity to improve his condition according to his own capacity, economy, and thrift. Various factors were instrumental in selecting for the early settlers a race

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1. Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 290

of adventurous, energetic, and freedom-loving people, among whom individualism was a natural consequence. It was probably among the settlers of the Middle West that we find this individualism most rampant. These people were scattered, isolated, and dependent upon their own resources.

This independence and self-reliance characteristic of the pioneer has had a clearly defined influence upon the social and political institutions. The resultant mental attitude leads to a disregard of forms and conventionalities whenever they hinder personality development. According to Mowrer,

> "Individualism in political relations means that each person reserves to himself the highest degree of autonomy and self-determination consistent with the necessary minimum of social control. In economic relations it means that each person is free to work for his livelihood in accordance with his own interests and wishes without arbitrary interference of his fellows. Carrying the same ideal into family relations, the individual asserts his right to seek whatever union will give him the greatest opportunity to express his personality and to dissolve as freely marital ties when they become oppressive." 1.

It seems very possible that this spirit of individualism has had an influence in making people less tolerant in enduring marital maladjustments.

Increase in Popular Learning. The increase of popular learning has been an important factor in the liberal movement. Education is gradually becoming the privilege of the masses. Hand in hand with this rise of education goes an increased

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1. Mowrer, Family Disorganization, p. 148

self-assurance and self-assertion. The masses are freed from ignorance and superstition which no longer have such a controlling power as formerly.

With this increased intellectual equipment the masses find it more difficult to bear injustices and inequalities. They are more sensitive to wrongs, and rights are demanded more persistently. Wrongs exist in marriage as in every other human relationship. Previously they may have been endured; but with a greater sensitivity, which more learning usually brings, these wrongs often become insufferable. This may present a dark picture for the family of the future with our gradual increase of popular learning; but Lichtenberger is encouraging when he says that it does not represent an unwholesome condition notwithstanding the fact that the immediate consequences appear to be detrimental; for he believes that the ultimate result will be a definite contribution to a higher standard of marital happiness and to an improved family life.[1.]

Changing Social Status of Women

Concomitantly and interdependently there have arisen in America, beginning with the aggressive pioneering spirit necessary in the opening and settlement of a new land, this individualism in all aspects of life, the increase in popular learning, a changing social status of woman, and a gradual

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1. Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 306

change in the ethical and religious values and standards. The woman of an earlier period played a solitary role of home worker, mother of children, and housewife. The woman of today has more largely the same opportunities for livelihood, business and professional activities as does man. This change has been evidenced in such signs as the reactionary and militant feminism, woman suffrage, permission to study, and the gradual opening of practically every business and profession to the woman.

In the general liberalizing movement, woman's position of inferiority, which was due largely to outworn marriage modes, to restricted outlook and activities, to lack of intellectual training, to economic dependence, and other similar causes, would naturally change. Dependence and oppression must necessarily give way to the social forces which have been working for centuries. This improved social status is indicated by more and more women being given equal legal recognition and protection with men, marriage and motherhood becoming matters of choice, improved economic and social conditions decreasing domestic responsibilities and making available interests outside the home.

Intolerance of Former Evils. Naturally along with this increased awakening of the individual and an increased intellectual and economic freedom has come a greater moral perception. One of the first relations to be affected are those in the domestic sphere. Here practices that were at one time

accepted without question are coming more and more to be obstacles in marital tranquility. The amount of cruelty, either physical or mental, which American women will endure is lessening. Treatment which once was regarded as the husband's right is now resented.

This actual or potential freedom of woman is the death knell of any coercive system of marriage. There is a constantly diminishing number of women who regard it a duty to endure a marriage relationship merely out of respect to marriage as an institution. There is an increasing tendency to revolt against conditions which are destructive of personality and consequently not in agreement with the highest morality.

Women are becoming less hesitant to acknowledge the disintegration of a marriage. For instance, in the past the acquiring of the legal recognition of a disintegrated marriage was mostly the privilege of the husband, but now women have as free access to the divorce courts as men. In regard to this, Lichtenberger says, "Neither the right nor the opportunity is, then, denied to those women whose marriage relations are unhappy, to free themselves from tyranny or abuse and with the motive intensified by a clearer perception of the wrongs involved, we might reasonably expect that an increase of divorces on the application of women would result and the assumption corresponds as we know, with the facts." 1.

This same authority expresses the belief that this fact does not necessarily indicate that marital conditions are

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1. Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 308 ff.

worse now than formerly, but it does indicate that women are using their new freedom to obtain relief from abuses to which formerly they were indifferent or from which there was no means of escape. To this extent the divorce rate is an index to the growing freedom, intelligence, and morality of American women.[1]

Careers. This new freedom has released many women from the necessity of committing themselves to housekeeping and has given them an opportunity of choosing between housekeeping and a career or attempting a compromise of both. This complicates domestic adjustment, for, in numerous cases, the adjustment centers about the problem of whether or not the wife will continue to work outside the family after marriage. The question is not necessarily an economic one for this problem frequently arises in the wealthy class; but whatever is the cause of the woman's continuing work outside the home, the situation requires some sort of a compromise in the husband - wife relationship. It seems that the decision as to whether the wife will or will not continue in outside work must rest with her; for if the decision is made to give up a career, she must not feel it a matrimonial penalty.

The choice is very important in making the marital adjustment. Even sex is closely connected with this decision. If the decision antagonizes the husband or makes him feel inferior, or influences him to think the wife is lacking in loyalty,

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1. Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 309

one of the first places this dissatisfaction may be felt is in his changed attitude toward sex. The same is true in the wife's case for if she feels the decision has been forced upon her or if it becomes disappointing with the passing of time, her dissatisfaction cannot be kept from her sex life.

There are many reasons why women desire to work outside the home. For some it is impossible to find within the limits of the home a satisfactory outlet for impulses that demand satisfaction. V. M. Collier in her study, Marriage and Careers found the reason most frequently given for a career was that it is a congenial occupation that adds to the wife's happiness and consequently to the happiness of the family. Less than one-tenth of the women in her study maintained they were motivated by economic necessity while nearly fifty per cent claimed they wanted to find an outlet for energy and for desire which the family did not satisfy. This study also revealed that these women were efficient and were as domestic as the average.

In such studies as the ones just mentioned, the causes given by the individuals studied may be questioned as to whether they are the real ones. Frequently the real causes are not recognized by the individuals.; rationalizations take the place of repressed factors.

There are obvious dangers to domestic adjustment when the wife continues her out-of-the-family work after marriage. The attempt of the wife to accept a double burden, to

maintain a family and to carry on simultaneously a vocation may be reflected in a growing dissatisfaction of the husband who may feel he is being neglected and has no real family life and who, consequently, may drift into activities which will further increase the breach. The woman's effort to carry on this double burden may result in nervousness, irritability, loss of appetite, nervous breakdown, or lack of time for domestic fellowship.

Individuals, both men and women, react in opposite directions to intense mental effort, as far as sex is concerned. For some, sex seems to be stimulated and requires more outlet, while for others sexual energy is decreased. In the latter case it is very possible that this would cause marital friction when the wife's outside activities lessened her energy for sexual expression. On the other hand, the wife who has been discontented may become happier, healthier, and stronger when she finds work outside the family to give her abilities an outlet.

Professor Groves suggests the importance of this problem in adjustment in his statements that,

> "The husband who takes it for granted that his wife will concentrate upon the home and surrender her career once she marries has little inkling of the meaning of domestic adjustment and by his lack of penetration endangers the security of the husband-wife relationship. The dilemma in which the ambitious woman finds herself when marriage antagonizes or prevents her career is, in the group of college graduates, often the major problem of domestic adjustment and sometimes the supreme problem." 1.

1. Groves, Ernest R., Marriage, p. 327

Parasites. Another condition, which jeopardizes marriage and which has arisen as a result mostly of the new freedom and of the economic status of the more fortunate classes, is the situation in which the wife lives more or less as a parasite. Among a considerable group the woman has been freed from all kinds of work, either household or outside work. Sometimes she prefers to work outside the home until after marriage, but upon marriage she considers she has entered an "economic vacation."[1.] After marriage she is supported by her husband although she contributes little to the relationship except sexually. She may live in an apartment hotel with nothing to do but care for her own personal possessions. She has no household interests and no children to care for. She spends her time seeking to satisfy her restlessness by seeking stimulations in outside leisure activities, activities which may lead her farther from the interests of her husband.

> "Such wives are not chattel-slaves, but willing dependents. They are not the drudging house servants of old, nor are they the co-laborers of their husbands as in our rural population. They differ in no essential from the kept woman, unless we have so low an estimate of the marriage state that we call the ceremony the essence, and a carelessly misplaced 'respectability' the final test of marriage morals." 2.

Such marriages are little capable of affording any permanent happiness, and it is in this group that are found

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1. Howard, G. E., History of Matrimonial Institutions, p. 249, Vol. III
2. Schroeder, Theodore, The Arena, December 1905, pp. 586-587 Reprinted in Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 276

many of the divorce scandals in "society life."

Change in Ethical and Religious Views

A change in ethical and religious views has been one expression of the new freedom. There is little question but that religion has served as a retarding force in the increase of divorce which we have explained previously is merely a legal recognition of a marital disintegration. In 1929 a special commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church made a study of divorce among church members and regular church attendants. This study indicated that divorce is comparatively infrequent among church-going people. This of course is not conclusive evidence of the effect of the Protestant Churches in preventing divorces, but it does show that the Church has had a restraining effect upon such procedure.

Along with scientific discoveries, increase in popular learning, and change in material culture has come a fundamental and radical change in religious thought. Superstitions, dogmatism, and fundamentalism are losing their controlling power over thinking and behavior. These same factors that have produced new religious beliefs have brought forth changed ethical values and concepts. Gradually conventions and concrete rules for conduct are ceasing to be regarded as absolute and the belief in general principles subject to rational interpretation is being substituted.

Marriage as an institution once demanded such loyalty that any marital unhappiness was to be endured, rather than

to become the cause for weakening, in any way, the institution. It was considered that man was made for marriage and not marriage for man. The new concept is that the moral value of marriage is found in the mutual happiness and well-being of those who enter it; and where this mutual happiness and well-being do not exist, then the moral interests of the individual and society are better served by dissolving the legal bonds of marriage. This new standard values an institution in proportion to its degree of service in the development of character and personality.

Lichtenberger believes that,

> "the present tendencies...exhibit a rising and not a falling standard of morals. The social unrest of our time very largely is due, not to worse conditions, but to better,... Religious reformations arise out of higher concepts of divine truth. Precisely in the same manner our modern social life manifests the signs, not of moral decadence, but of moral advance..." 1.

Equal Standard of Morals. One evidence of the revised ethical and religious views is the attempt to do away with the double standard of sex morality. Present ethical tendencies are demanding an equal standard for men and women. The rise and existence of the double standard was due largely to the economic dependence of women in the past. With the change in the economic and social status of women the necessity for toleration of the double standard is passing.

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 321 and 322

However, there is a question as to whether the single standard will tend to lessen the restraints placed upon women rather than tighten those placed upon men. Bertrand Russell states,

> "Modern feminists are no longer so anxious as feminists of thirty years ago to curtail the 'vices' of men; they ask rather that what is permitted to men shall be permitted also to them. Their predecessors sought equality in moral slavery, whereas they seek equality in moral freedom." 1.

It is impossible to include here a full discussion of the double standard, but it is important to us in that it is sometimes the cause of friction in marriage. As a result of the new status of woman there are those who refuse to submit to a marital relationship which is repulsive to them because of the practice of the double standard on the part of the husband. On the other hand, there are husbands who find this refusal of women to accept the double standard an expression of the changed status of women which they are not yet ready to accept.

Higher Ideals of Marital Happiness. The happiness of husband and wife was not of particular concern as long as marriage was maintained by traditional or legal coercion, but with changed attitudes the permanency of marriage comes more to rest upon mutual interest and co-operation. Consequently incompatibility or other conditions which desecrate personality

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1. Russel, B., Marriage and Morals, p. 84, quoted by Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 330

are much more serious than formerly. Gradually affection is coming to be regarded as the only moral basis of marriage.

As has previously been pointed out, the increase in the manifestations of marital maladjustment does not necessarily indicate an increase in maladjustment. It probably indicates a greater tendency to refuse to endure an unhappy relationship. Lichtenberger's statement in reference to the divorce trend might well apply to all evidences of marital disharmony.

> "The divorce trend...may be but the indications of a healthy discontent with present moral standards and may be only the visible evidences of a struggle toward a higher ethical consciousness in regard to sexual and other marital relations." 1.

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 322

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

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Passing of Economic Function of the Family

In the past the household was the economic unit of production. Production which was necessary to maintain the family was carried on largely within the household with each member contributing according to his ability. Agriculture was predominant. Each family produced its own food and clothing, and to a certain extent other household needs. Women were necessarily home-makers and house-keepers. This enterprise demanded all their time, strength, and ability. Spinsterhood was feared because of the insecurity of this status and the social attitude toward it. Because of its economic asset marriage was practically forced upon both men and women. Children were an asset rather than a liability.

The economic function of the family made the members conscious of common interests and thus contributed to a well-knit home life. If there were any incompatibilities between husband and wife, the economic pressure and the care of children afforded a strong incentive for either enduring them or adjusting any difficulties.

All this has now changed. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution the family lost its economic function.

Members were taken from the home into mills and factories and later into business and professions. Members of the family who had contributed to the support of the family must either enter employment outside the home or become idle dependents upon the husband and father. The economic necessity which formerly served to consolidate the family began to weaken family ties by the loss of common interests.

Economic Emancipation of Women

The exodus of industry from the home and the movement of population from the rural sections to urban centers contributed to the "emancipation" of women. The many opportunities offered woman to be self-supporting have freed her to a great degree in her economic dependence on man. She is no longer restricted to marriage as an only means of support. In fact marriage as a means of support has declined immensely since women have discovered they are able to support themselves. It has affected the very significance of marriage.

Previous to this emancipation the wife "belonged" to the husband. Not only her person but also her children and the products of her labor were her husband's. Marriage was usually coercive. The privilege of consenting to motherhood or choosing the father of her children did not belong to woman. Although she might have been well cared for and not consciously submissive and oppressed, yet the very dependence limited the development of her personality and retarded her intellectual development and physical well-being.

As far as marriage is concerned woman's desire for security has become less important with her entrance into out-of-the-home employment by which she can support herself and at the same time have prestige and status. For this reason women of today are more and more looking to marriage for love and affection. It is in marriage that the desire for response is most satisfactorily found in our present social order for most men and women. Among an increasing number the permanency of the marriage bond is dependent upon love and affection in the relationship. The desire for response has superseded the economic motive.

Lichtenberger calls attention to the fact that

> "It is to be expected that the economic emancipation of one half of the human race from bondage to the other half will be followed by readjustments in other social relations. This is precisely what is happening at the present time within the domestic institution. In so far as marriages are still held together alone by the coercive marital authority of the husband on the ground of economic dependence of the wife many of them are destined to disintegrate." 1.

The influence of the economic emancipation of woman can readily be seen. Since other vocations than marriage are open to her, she is no longer impelled economically into marriage. If marriage does prove a failure, she is not forced to choose between destitution and enduring the marriage failure, but has the opportunity for independent support. Thus

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 284

the new economic conditions along with other aspects of the new freedom explain, at least partly, the increase in the legal dissolution of the marriage ties. These same factors probably explain partially why about two-thirds of all divorces granted in the United States are on the petition of wives.

Economic Difficulties and Misunderstandings

Many situations may arise in most any marriage relationship to cause economic tensions. There is little probability but that the Industrial Revolution brought about conditions and attitudes which make various economic factors a greater potential source of conflict. There are numerous factors which, taken individually or in combination, may be the cause of economic difficulties. Among these are: poverty, financial reverses, stinginess or extravagance, dissatisfaction over amount of income, who spends the family income, budgeting for diverse types of expenditures, installment buying, luxurious expenditures, conspicuous waste, separate incomes, savings, increasing or lowering the standard of living, vocational interests, vocational separation in employment, mobility of employment, wife's employment or earnings, wife's dependence or independence, wife's allowances or joint account, employment of children, ignorance of husband's income, support of relatives.[1.] Any one of these items may intensify

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 395

a conflict which has its source in some other aspect of the marriage relationship or it may be the beginning of a differentiated individualization of the husband and wife.

Dr. Hamilton found in his study of married couples that a little over twenty-five per cent of those investigated reported serious difficulties over money matters. In commenting on this he says,

> "Friction over money is usually a symptom of something wrong with marriage. It is not necessarily the cause of the trouble." 1.

The same thing, however, may be said of many factors, that is, they may be the initial cause of friction or they may intensify an irritation which has its source elsewhere.

Among the factors listed which may be the cause of economic difficulties, there are several which may arise at the outset of marriage. A satisfactory economic adjustment is apt to be quite complicated, and opportunities for friction and misunderstanding are many. Sometimes the adjustment is made more difficult by the failure of the husband and wife to have any kind of understanding previous to marriage regarding money matters.

Also the economic emancipation of women has had its effect on their attitudes so that the problem of financial adjustment is greater than it once was. Many women now enter marriage with experience in making their own individual money

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What is Wrong with Marriage, p. 70

decisions and have developed habits and standards of expenditures as definitely as have their husbands. Then also most American women have a very definite conception of economic justice in the relationship of husband and wife. Consequently their demands are more exacting and possibly more individualistic than were those of their mothers and their grandmothers. [1.]

As a housewife a great share of the woman's task has to do with consumption rather with production as formerly. This encourages the idea that the wife spends while the husband earns. In this notion there is opportunity for discord in proportion as the man regards his income as his exclusive possession and in proportion as the wife is ambitious, self-assertive, and has had high earning power herself.

Another cause of financial difficulties is the lack of preparation in managing a household. This includes both men and women, many of whom enter marriage little realizing that marriage involves a business enterprise. As young women have gone out from the home for employment, there has been a corresponding loss of household apprenticeship. It is true that formal education has offered some opportunities for such preparation, especially in home economic courses; but it is also true that many girls are never enrolled in such courses and that many of these courses are sadly lacking in training in the practical management of the household. In consequence

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1. Groves, Ernest R., Marriage, p. 289

many enter marriage with little conception of household responsibility and efficient housekeeping. Of course the ability to overcome this handicap depends on the individuals.

There is one economic pitfall of marriage which is the result of that modern competition which pervades most realms of American life and is in evidence in many households. This is the attempt to equal or to excel others in the same or higher social scale. It results in the misuse of money in an effort to keep pace with some more fortunate family. Such expenditures are often quite beyond the legitimate and available means of the family and consequently entail anxiety and hardship. There are times when the woman sacrifices her husband's love in such a rivalry; and there are husbands who cause marital friction by an excessive commitment to success in business or a career in an effort to forge ahead of competitors. Whenever either the husband or wife or both become involved in any sort of such ostentation, domestic felicity is likely to suffer.

The necessity of a woman to seek employment outside the home is a menace to happiness in the family. The fact that necessity has taken her from the home implies that the woman must attempt to carry on two jobs, the outside employment and homemaking. She is unable to hire assistance in the home work. This burden is almost certain to lead inevitably to a nervous and physical condition which lessens her fitness for the functions of wife and mother. Returning home weary after a

day's work, she finds home duties awaiting her, which, if performed properly, lead to further exhaustion and irritability, or, if neglected, are likewise a source of dissatisfactions in the average home. Through the struggle for necessities the home loses its charm, and human differences which otherwise might pass practically unnoticed, are apt to become magnified until the strain is too great for the marriage bond.

There are many other economic factors, all of which are closely related and interdependent upon each other. Unemployment is one which has become tremendous in the last five years. As yet it is impossible to determine its effect upon marriage stability, but it seems quite certain that the insecurity and the nervous tension which it entails cannot but have a bearing on the happiness in the family. Irritations are apt to loom up out of all proportion and likewise irritability grows.

The inability to make both ends meet, no matter what the cause, an inadequate income or spending beyond what can be afforded by either the husband or wife or both, is a source of financial worry which will gnaw into the happiness of the home. Then there are debts, acquired unwisely or out of necessity, which are apt to cause worry and endanger the harmony of the home.

This is a very brief consideration of vital economic factors in marriage maladjustment. It is important to realize that financial factors may be the initial cause of marital difficulties, they may be contributing factors, or a more deep-seated cause may find expression in economic tensions.

PART III

INTERNAL FACTORS

For the sake of convenience, there will be considered in the following chapters what are here classified as "internal factors." By these internal factors are meant those which are more dependent upon the conditioning and subsequent behavior of the individual rather than those factors which are conspicuously the result of great social and political movements.

CHAPTER V

CONFLICTING CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS AND BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

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Cultural Differentiation

Among the many causes of internal tensions are those which result from a difference in race, religion, education, and social class. Mowrer, in his classification of types of family tensions, refers to those which have their source in the difference of cultures as "cultural differentiation." [1.]

Such conflict usually involves the question of right and wrong and proper and improper conduct. Since social contacts are made upon the basis of cultural interests and characteristics, the choice of friends, recreation, and leisure time activities may become a source of irritation because of cultural differences. Personalities develop under the influence of social contacts; and if these contacts are widely different for the husband and wife, they may lead to changes in personalities and to a loss of common interests and understanding.

Race. The marriage of couples from fundamentally different races has inherent within it many potential causes of

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1. Mowrer, E. R., Family Disorganization, p. 196

conflict. This is doubly true where a difference in race also involves a difference in nationality. Culture traits vary to such a degree among the racial and nationality groups that conflict is almost inevitable in such a union. Evidence of difference in these culture traits is found in respect to the status of the wife, standards of living, sexual attitudes, ethical evaluations, the authority of the husband, and the discipline and education of children.

In the United States inter-marriage between races almost inevitably brings ostracism from one or both social groups. There may be some individuals who can be happy in spite of this disapproval but the possibility is that it will eventually mar the happiness of the couple. Such social difficulties would probably cause a frustration of all of Thomas' four fundamental wishes. In such circumstances adjustment is impossible. Even where the couple is able to surmount the racial barrier, the child of such a union is apt to suffer because a normal development and adjustment is impossible. This is especially true in the case of Negroes and whites, and Americans and Orientals.

Religion. It is quite commonly accepted that marriages of couples of widely separated religious faiths assume an extra hazard. In considering religion as a factor in tensions, we must remember that it is almost impossible to separate the factor of religion from the larger culture pattern of which it is a part. Usually in referring to differences of

religion, are meant those differences found in the Catholic, Protestant,and Jewish faiths. There may be some cause of religious tension in mixed marriages among the Protestant denominations, but the decreasing importance of doctrines is probably lessening such tensions. An exception to this seems to be the marriage where one is a strong adherent to the Christian Science faith and the other is strongly opposed to it.

Groves [1.] refers to a study of some sixty families that represented marriages of mixed religions. These families were in difficulties enough to bring them to the attention of a social agency. However, the study did not disclose anything definite as to how far religious differences operate against happy family life. It did reveal that most of the families were hindered by the differences so that their unlike faiths were at least contributing causes to the family problem. This study also showed that relatives who wished the family committed to one of the two churches represented were at times the origin of the difficulty.

In some cases there are institutional pressures brought to bear upon the husband or wife of a different faith in an attempt to conform his or her attitudes and behavior to the sect which the institution or group represents. This tends to induce or intensify the strains.

Tensions due to differences in religion develop as the result of attendance at different places of worship, efforts

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1. Groves, E., Social Problems of the Family, p. 167

to proselyte, disrespect for each other's views and from different attitudes toward the nature of marriage, sexual relations, size of families, and birth control, the rearing of children in the faith, the selection of parochial or other schools, and many similar matters.

Education. Where there exists a disparity in education and intellectual interests, a marriage assumes a risk that tensions may develop because of this difference. Attention may not be given to such a disparity during courtship, but after the glamour of romance has subsided and life has become more routine, such differences are apt to become only too apparent.

There are instances where the development of the two individuals was about on a par at the time of marriage; and then one continued to develop and mature while the other ceased to grow mentally. Such cases have occurred where the young husband has continued his formal education after marriage and the wife has given up hers, either because of necessity or preference. In such circumstances the differences of interests may increase to the point of constituting a source of tension in the domestic relationship. There is likewise the danger in the intellectual stimuli of husbands in professional and public life as compared with the limited experiences of many housewives.

Professor Dearborn has found in his experiences that where there is a difference in the amount of formal education, that usually the most successful marriages are those in which

the husband has more education than the wife rather than the reverse.[1.]

Dr. Hamilton observed that,

> "Where the husband and wife had an equal amount of formal education, the couples were above the average for happiness. Superior education made those men and women unhappy whose mates did not have it, and made the uneducated mates more than usually content."2.

While there are probably many conflict situations which arise because of the greater sensitiveness of the educated,

> "the chief difficulties appear to be due to the cumulative process of alienation explainable for the reason that one party grows away from the other until an intolerable state of uncongeniality results." 3.

While there are exceptions here as in other factors, nevertheless it appears that the chances for marital happiness are greater where the mental growth of the two individuals approximate each other although the development may be in different specialized fields.

Social Class. In spite of the fact we are considering marital relations in democratic America, we must recognize that differences in social class may constitute an insurmountable barrier in marital happiness. This is not because of the differences themselves but because of their influence in habits, points of view, mannerisms,

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1. Dearborn, L. W., Lecture Notes in course, "Sex Factors in Human Relations."
2. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 279 Quoted from Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 401
3. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 401

differences in etiquette, and general culture. Such inter-class marriages often face greater difficulties than those in which there exists a difference in race, religion, or education.

Spectacular marriages of the inter-class type are not uncommon and accounts of such unions are frequently blazoned in head-lines of the daily newspaper, but almost as frequently divorce accounts follow within a few months or years. Examples of such marriages are found in the union of a millionaire with his stenographer or of the millionaire's daughter with the chauffeur.

It is not impossible to overcome the barriers between social classes; but with everything equal, the chances for domestic happiness are greater where social distinctions do not exist.

Behavior Patterns and Attitudes

Every individual develops through life attitudes as a result of environmental influences. Around these attitudes develop behavior reactions and behavior patterns until we have a life pattern which is the integration into a whole of the psychological and habit complexes of the individual.

Professor Mowrer explains this life pattern in the following manner:

> "There is in the individual a schematization of all his habits which gives to them a consistency and unity. Each individual, more often unconsciously than consciously, works out for himself an outlook upon the whole of life which takes the form of a philosophy. This schematization which may be

> called his 'pattern of life,' determines the general attitude or bias with which he will approach any problem. Where there is too great diversity between the patterns of husband and wife there tends to be conflict or tension." 1.

This same authority indicates that although it is not yet known whether life patterns are based upon temperamental characteristics, nevertheless personal experience modifies greatly the development from the temperamental background. In many persons a change occurs with age, and critical situations are apt to cause profound effects.

A difference in life patterns may go unnoticed until a crisis is experienced or certain age periods are reached. The individualization of life patterns may occur because of different experiences of the husband and wife or a difference in age. Vocational separation may also be a factor.

Late and Early Marriages. There are advantages and disadvantages in both late and early marriages. In both there are obstacles to a successful marriage.

The organism is ready for marriage biologically before it is socially. Today there is a tendency to delay marriage because of the consideration given social values. One of the reasons for delay is the importance attached to intellectual maturity and achievement and to economic considerations. Then there is the tendency to over-emphasize physical attraction in the early marriage.

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1. Mowrer, E. R., Family Disorganization, p. 210

There is a danger where early marriage necessitates discontinuing a formal education, that later the one partner will hold the other responsible for his failure to achieve this particular goal. This may be done subconsciously or consciously. If a couple who have married early cease to grow, or if one advances beyond the other, the marriage will probably result in disaster. There is a tendency in early marriages to settle down to a routine life. The subsequent monotony may undermine the physical ties which were at first so prominent. The economic insecurity often encountered in an early marriage may later disrupt the happiness of the marriage by causing economic tensions and conflicts.

In considering late marriages we find that the habit risk is one of the greatest. A condition often found among persons who marry late in life when behavior patterns are mature and rigid is the life-pattern has been so strongly developed as to make adjustment difficult. Another disadvantage of marrying late is the long period of strain which most must undergo where marriage is delayed. This refers not only to sexual tension but to those urges for responses of fellowship.

In the sex life late marriage leads to a temptation to eliminate sex tension by temporary and irresponsible relationships. We shall consider these pre-marital relationships more fully in a later chapter. If an attempt is made to eliminate sex tension by suppression, other dangers arise; for if this

is continued long, sex desire is weakened and such a frustration cannot but have its effect in the sex life of the man and woman when marriage does occur.

Marked Difference in Age. A great difference in age adds to the natural hazards of marriage. This is mostly but not entirely because of the importance it has from the view of physical sex. It is hazardous for a man to marry a woman much older than himself. On the other hand, the marriage of an old man with a young girl presents difficulties in the sex adjustment of the two individuals.

One writer refers to such a union as an expression of a "post mortem passion" which, he continues, would be pathetic if it were not so completely and ignobly selfish. The logical sequence of senile passion is senile jealousy, with or without cause, but usually and naturally with cause.[1.]

Of course there are exceptions to all generalities. The marriage of Robert Browning to Elizabeth Barrett is such an exception. Professor Dearborn says he has known a number of marriages which were apparently successful where the difference in age was fifteen years or so.

Temperament. There are temperaments and dispositions which are incompatible and which become antagonistic under the slightest provocation. From this there arises nagging and irritation which in turn intensifies the temperamental differences.

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1. Ramus, C., Marriage and Efficiency, p. 17

The "incompatibility of temperament" of the divorce courts often refers to lack of physical adjustment. For instance, a passionate man may marry a cold woman or vice versa. Any great difference in this regard may lead to great unhappiness. Fortunately we are constantly gaining a better understanding of such incompatibilities; and where there is difficulty, an adjustment may often be effected through the help of one who understands such problems.

Interests. In every completely satisfying marriage there must be a community of interests. Where this is lacking there is probability that the union was consummated primarily because of sex interest which in itself does not make for a stable marriage. The interests may be similar at the time of marriage; but, as we have said before, they may become so widely divergent after marriage, because of lack of growth of one partner or different contacts of the two, that they constitute a marriage hazard.

An illustration of a couple where sex is the common interest is given by Dr. Ramus.

> "The man loves business, politics, theatres and cabarets. The wife, in addition to her home and children, loves art, music, and higher thought. He is bored by art, music, and thought. She is bored by business details and politics. She occasionally enjoys the theater but detests cabarets... And even their sex interest is not wholly in common because they each approach it from widely differing points of view....So neither really satisfies the other in the only common interest they had when they began married life, and when that interest ceases to be mutual, they begin to realize the

dreary fact that although wedded for life they are far apart as the Poles." 1.

There are women who neglect to develop interests along with their husbands. They have been brought up to believe that the surest way to a man's heart is by way of his stomach and have awakened, frequently too late, to realize that such a theory has been carried to excess.

The necessity for a community of interests does not imply that the husband and wife should not have separate interests for this is often a wise plan. It does mean, however, that there should be common interests and there should be no antagonistic interests.

Irritating Habits. Bad habits may have a very disrupting influence on domestic happiness. Some of them may in themselves seem trivial to others or even pass unnoticed but assume major proportions because of their effect on the marriage partner.

Professor Groves cites an illustration in which the husband was the victim of the manner in which the wife reacted to trivial habits.

"Mrs. L., the wife of a doctor, has left her home and is planning to get a divorce. Her marriage was for spite. She became angry over a note incorrectly interpreted, written by the young man to whom she was engaged, turned from him and a few months later married a doctor with whom she had meanwhile become acquainted. At first the marriage appeared successful but after a year trouble began to brew. She complained of habits that annoyed

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1. Ramus, C., Marriage and Efficiency, p. 24

> although she had to admit they were rather trivial and balanced by other qualities more desirable. The real situation immediately appeared when she told of her first engagement, her regret that she foolishly broke it off, and declared that the habits of her husband that annoyed her always suggested her first lover since they were just opposite to his ways." 1.

Habits are closely inter-related with temperament, and disagreeable ones may develop because of temperament. Among these are the insistence to have one's "own way," unwillingness to "give and take," the tendency to find fault, to spite, or to disparage-all of which will produce resentment which destroys what otherwise might be a good marriage.

Women have married men believing in their promises to reform after marriage. The common experience is that such promises are seldom kept and the woman finds herself married to a disagreeable or incompatible man, who may be a drunkard or a drug fiend.

Habits which may cause disharmony are numerous and some would be ridiculous if it were not for the tragic effect they may have on the marriage relationship. Among these are smoking, vulgarity, untidiness, and bad table manners. One author lists snoring which he says may in itself be enough to cause disgust and kill out all romance. He continues:

> "Snoring is bad enough taken by itself as noise, but there is also to be considered the appearance of the snorer."2.

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1. Groves, E. R., Social Problems of the Family, p. 128
2. Ramus, C., Marriage and Efficiency, p. 19

Personal Hygiene. The necessity for personal hygiene, especially in such an intimate relationship as marriage, seems self-evident, and yet the experience of physicians indicates there are numerous cases even among people of social position who are negligent in this respect.

First, there are odors. Some people are stimulated by them to feel either intense pleasure or extreme disgust. The attractiveness of a woman may be enhanced or detracted from by the perfumes she uses or does not use. In friendship and courtship a man or woman always tries to appear as attractive as possible. This naturally includes bathing as a precaution. After marriage there is apt to come a tendency to neglect somewhat personal appearance and hygiene. A man may omit his shave and bath or neglect to brush his teeth at night. A woman may neglect shampooing her hair until it has a disagreeable odor. One or both may be neglectful until bad breath results. Excessive perspiration of the underarms, feet, or other parts of the body usually causes a disagreeable odor which may be repulsive to the husband or wife. The hygiene of menstruation is very important in marriage, especially if the husband happens to be over-sensitive and fastidious. Many women seem to fail to sense the essential unattractiveness of the menstrual condition and permit it to become more obvious than is necessary. Another breach of personal hygiene is carelessness in always wearing clean, fresh underwear.

An offensive odor from the person of the loved inspires a feeling almost or revulsion which may be hard to forget. Such experiences are not common before marriage; it is after marriage that personal appearance, cleanliness, and breath are apt to be neglected. Negligence in attention to personal attractiveness is consequently one of the causes for an alienation of affection and sex interest and a development of indifference. There are cases, in which one of the mates was sensitive and the other became careless of personal appearance and cleanliness, in which the effect of the disgust aroused rendered him or her unresponsive and cold or even sexually impotent or frigid towards the mate.

CHAPTER VI

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURTSHIP AND HONEYMOON TO DISCORD

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"A deathless bubble from the fresh lips blown
Of Cherubim at play about God's throne
Seemed her virginity. She dreamed alone
Dreams round and sparkling as some sea-washed stone.
Then an oaf saw and lusted at the sight.
They smashed the thing upon their wedding night." 1.

Courtship and the honeymoon have much more to do with marriage happiness than most persons recognize. Unwise experiences during courtship or an unfortunate honeymoon can easily mar what would otherwise be a happy marriage.

Dangers in Courtship.

The period of courtship should function as a means of getting acquainted and also as a period of experimentation in that it should afford an opportunity for association with different individuals and avoidance of the danger of choosing from too narrow a range. Any aspect of a courtship that makes this period an end in itself or causes it to rival later marriage is a perversion of its purpose. What happens in courtship has its greatest significance after marriage; it may serve as a foundation upon which marriage happiness is built

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1. Dunch, Susan Miles, Quoted in Royden, A. Maude, Sex and Common Sense

or it may be remembered regretfully. The experiences of courtship are significant because of their emotional character. Such experiences may seem trivial in proportion to the emotional reactions of the individuals concerned.

Petting is an important aspect of courtship. The term itself is vague and suggests various meanings to different individuals, but it generally refers to some form of love-making in the realm of secondary sex expression.

There are arguments both for and against petting, as to its effect on married life, but there is no question but that it does serve a definite purpose. Such intimacies as found in petting bring a greater maturity to heterosexual urges and also act as sublimating as well as stimulating experiences. Some maintain that petting offers an opportunity whereby young people can find whether they are erotically fitted for each other. In this way the high-sexed will find each other more appealing and likewise the low-sexed. Thus petting tends to obviate physical mismating which is a frequent cause of marital failure.

Another argument for these secondary expressions is that the young woman who has indulged in such expression is not apt to suffer that tragic shock of the wedding night which is discussed elsewhere. Her sex nature has been aroused sufficiently so that she is aware of it and even anticipating the intimacies.

Professor Dearborn feels that those who pet are more apt to marry successfully than those who do not. Those who

desist from such practices either are not as highly sexed as others or have been conditioned to believe such expressions are wrong. If petting is considered wrong, a similar attitude may be assumed toward the marital relationship in marriage. He believes the danger in petting lies largely in the sense of guilt which arises when the individual concerned believes it to be a sin.

One of the arguments against petting is such an intimacy may go so far that one or both individuals may consider marriage an obligation. Even in recognizing such a duty there may be a loss of a desire to marry. The point at which there comes a feeling of obligation to marry is by no means dependent on an intimacy that leads to pregnancy or the fear of pregnancy. The degree of intimacy which produces this feeling varies and depends upon the social culture and the individual's conditioning. Nevertheless, this precocious commitment, no matter what amount of intimacy has caused it, endangers domestic happiness for "Obligation is always a dangerous door-mat to matrimony." [1.]

Also excessive petting is likely to lead to mismating by over-stimulating the physical urges and causing one to lose sight of those more essential personal qualities which are necessary for a lasting happiness.

Some train themselves to enjoy such intimacies to the extent that their sex hunger becomes fixed upon the level of

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1. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 114

secondary expression. They become so satisfied by the various forms of petting that they find it difficult to pass into the normal marriage relationship. According to Groves, some who seem in courtship to be highly sexed lose their normal biological hunger through the habit of secondary expression.

The practice is perhaps dangerous when it is indulged in excessively by couples who cannot marry for months or years. It may be unwise for a couple who cannot marry within a few weeks or months to go too far in the practice of petting. It may make it difficult for them to refrain from sexual relations or may lead them to a premature marriage which under the circumstances may be quite indiscreet.

The following is an illustration of such a case:

> "A couple were swept off their feet and married before education was complete. They planned to go on to school, but the parents refused to help them; in less than a year there was a child; times were hard; there were many bills to pay, and the education was never completed. They crippled themselves seriously and ruined their lives. It does not help their tangled problem to have each reminding the other of what might have been if he or she had not been so foolish as to have married the other." 1.

If a couple are in love and expect to marry within a few weeks or months, petting is very natural and proper, and permits a gradual and natural increase of intimacies

> "until at the time of conventional marriage they are ready for the next step, which is sexual union, without the silly giggling and embarrassment which has been supposed to be the crowning

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1. Rice, Thurman B., The Age of Romance, p. 18

beauty of the recently married couples." 1.

Here may also be mentioned the possibility of marriage being an anti-climax to the courtship. In the sharp break that occurs for some couples between the spirit of courtship and the actualities of marriage lurks a menace to the future of their married life. The woman more often than the man finds difficulty in making this transference from the high emotional state of the courtship period to the responsibilities of marriage. She may blame the change to the man's ambition in business or even to a lack of sincere affection. She may feel that because the husband's courtship fervor is waning, her power is dwindling and thus is coming to an end the most interesting period of her life. The woman may cling to the courtship because marriage offers her less opportunity to make social contacts and to transfer her interests. The man is forced quite soon to relinquish the high emotional state of courtship by the necessity of his entering the business world and concentrating on obligations he cannot escape. But if there is to be wholesome married life the courtship must pass on and become a part of the more stable and more satisfying experiences of happy domestic life.

Unfortunate Honeymoons

The honeymoon, as we know it today, is a distinctly modern invention and one of the most advantageous that has to do

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1. Rice, Thurman B., The Age of Romance, p. 19

with marriage. It gives an opportunity to transfer safely from the atmosphere of courtship to the realities of marriage. It is a means of escape from self-consciousness at the beginning of marriage. This is usually done more easily by travel, a new environment, or something that takes the couple from their customary associations. Because the honeymoon is a period of transition from courtship attitudes to those of marriage, it has a decided significance that may color the entire domestic life of the couple.

The honeymoon is sometimes hazardous to a wholesome start of marriage. The wedding may leave the husband or wife or both tired, nervous, and supersensitive. Even a simple ceremony is fatiguing. It is, therefore, wise to have a honeymoon program which is not itself tiring but one which offers a means of relaxation. The travel that goes with the conventional honeymoon may be unduly prolonged so that it results in excessive fatigue. Even under the most favorable conditions, travel causes fatigue which easily leads to irritability and other emotional exaggerations which are not conducive to an auspicious beginning of marriage. There may be also financial worry on the part of the man, for frequently trips are taken that are too expensive. On the other hand, those who are able financially often take the risk of extending the honeymoon to great lengths and give it an abnormal testing by such a trip as a cruise around the world. A honeymoon that means absence from familiar circumstances for a number of

weeks or even months at the start of marriage puts too much strain upon the association of husband and wife. The length of the honeymoon is relative, but for the average young man a trip that means much over two weeks from his vocation is apt to lead to restlessness; and the wife usually becomes anxious to get back and start the experience under normal conditions.

As has been said before, the honeymoon is a critical period in the adjustment of the two individuals concerned. Blunders are sometimes committed during the honeymoon that wreck the marriage.

The difficulty which is of sex origin seems to be the most serious. In referring to this Maude Royden refers to "the sin of the bridegroom." She continues:

> "You can bargain for the possession of a violin and the moment it is yours, may play upon it. It is yours. If you are in the mood to play, it must be ready for you. If it is not, then tune it, and it will be. But a human being cannot be treated so in any human relationship. It needs mutual patience and mutual respect to make a relationship human."
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> "....Husbands have, in genuine ignorance of the cruelty they were committing, raped their wives on their wedding night. Judging from what one knows of wedding-days, it could hardly be a more unpropitious moment for the consummation of marriage. And when to the fatigue and strain of the day is added....blank though uneasy ignorance as to what marriage involves, or the thunderbolt of knowledge (sic) launched by the bride's mother the night before, or the morning of the day itself, it would be difficult with the utmost deliberation and skill better to ensure absolute repulsion and disgust on the part of the bride."

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1. Royden, A. Maude, Sex and Common Sense, p. 188 ff.

Another competent authority, in discussing the wedding night writes:

> "If both parties are eager for intimate relations there can be no possible reason for objection, and any display of mock modesty will be entirely out of harmony with the spirit of trust and honesty which should characterize every act at such a time. If, on the other hand, the bride is somewhat frightened by the nearness of the new relation, or if the bridegroom is nervous and embarrassed, delay is the only safeguard....Silly giggling, mock modesty, undressing in the closet, turning out the light in order to save the terrible shame of the occasion are as much out of place as would be a vaudeville act in the Holy of Holies. This is the time of all times for truth rather than for hypocrisy....The slightest show of fear, distrust, or apprehension constitute a serious flaw." 1.

> "How disgusting it would seem to a fine girl to have her new husband urging her for immediate gratification as soon as they were in the bedroom. She would be entitled to suppose that he cared only for her physical self. He should have assured her during their period of engagement that he could and would await her pleasure. He should show by his every act that he is rapturously in love with her and not merely with her sex in its more obvious manifestations...Unfortunate, indeed, is the couple if one or both insist on draining the cup of delight at a single draught." 1.

Although difficulties often arise during the honeymoon, frequently the responsibility can be placed only superficially on what happens during this period. The trouble often lies deeper and would eventually lead to maladjustment no matter how successful the honeymoon itself had been. This period presents a test of the individuals' characters as do the later experiences of matrimony.

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1. Rice, Thurman B., The Age of Romance, p. 31 ff.

"The chief requirement for a successful honeymoon is that in this period when emotions run high and strong nothing shall occur that does violence to mutual trust, respect and love." 1.

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1. Groves, Ernest R., Marriage, p. 187

CHAPTER VII

PATHOLOGICAL FACTORS

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The assertion that no person should marry who is not in a state of perfect health cannot be made dogmatically for some of the happiest and most beautiful marriages start with the seeming handicap of physical defect or illness, and there are many instances in which the illness of the wife or the husband is a means of calling forth manifestations of affection and devotion. A classical illustration of such a one is that of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning. However,

> "health and happiness sustain a causal relationship to each other in human experience generally and marriages furnish no exception to this rule. Dr. Davis investigated this subject, among others, and found that stability of health was approximately 13 per cent less in the unhappy group as compared with the happy and concludes that 'this is difference large enough to be significant.'" 1.

In Marriage in the Modern Manner the authors suggest that

> "Sickness is the great test which will disclose the weakness or the strength of a union. In its presence love becomes stronger, trivial misunderstandings evaporate and unselfishness shines out. But love which is shallow, which is based on passion or self-interest, reveals itself as such in a crisis." 2.

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 403
2. Wile, I. S. and Winn, M. D., Marriage in the Modern Manner, p. 74.

Thus a pathological condition may bind the marriage tie more strongly or it may be the basic cause or a contributing factor to the disruption of the union. In the latter case it may serve to intensify conflict situations which arise in other sources or it may involve behavior problems which create tensions as well as aggravate others. Many of the psychological difficulties of adjustment in married life have their roots in some form of physical disability. Individuals suffering from a physical ailment may be impatient, irritable, nervous, exasperating, in other words, difficult to live with. A husband or wife who does not recognize illness in the other may stigmatize the partner as lazy, good for nothing, or worthless. A shiftless or complaining husband or a wife who is worn out do not make satisfactory marriage partners. This is particularly true when the origin of the condition is not suspected or known. Disagreeable temperaments instead of indicating that love is dead and marriage a failure may indicate the need of a surgeon or medical attention to restore married happiness.

Physical Diseases

There are degenerative diseases, deficiency diseases, and focal infections, - all of which may cause changes in temperament, magnify existing strains, or in themselves be causes for unhappiness. The degenerative diseases, as tuberculosis, diseases of the arteries, and cancer, may in their early stages undermine physical vitality without the patient's being aware of the cause.

Diseases which are due mainly to some deficiency in the diet include scurvy, pellagra, berberi, rickets, and goiter. These have periods in which the disease itself is not evident but nevertheless general impairment in health occurs.

Then there are such physical disturbances as organic defects of the digestive, circulatory, or respiratory systems, glandular disturbances, focal infections connected with teeth or tonsils, and also fatigue. Fatigue is especially important where the wife is over-burdened with house-work and the care of children, or where outside employment must be added to her duties.

The accompanying brutalities and bestialities, the delusions and hallucinations, the accusations of drug addiction are perils to any marriage. Evils of alcoholism are especially apparent in the sex life, for while alcohol heightens sex desire, it also prevents intelligent control of this function, leading to undesired pregnancies or to infidelity.

There is venereal disease which is undoubtedly the most sinister intruder into any marriage relation and can absolutely wreck every hope of conjugal felicity. Although these diseases are usually contracted through sex relations, they may also be acquired "innocently," that is, without sexual contact. For this reason they may be unsuspected and produce deteriorating effects before being detected. These diseases entail misery, serious female disorders, barrenness, and other physical and mental consequences. Besides these ravages there

probably is no surer means of killing affection and assuring marital disaster than when a wife learns that she has acquired syphilis or gonorrhea from the husband, or that she may acquire it from him either because he married while he was infected or has acquired the disease since marriage. Likewise the husband who finds himself in a corresponding relation to his wife will find it almost impossible to assume normal relations.

Dr. Thurman B. Rice points out that venereal diseases are capable of much more damage than the actual physical injury which they may do.

> "To know or to believe that one's system is thoroughly impregnated with the germs of these infections; to know that the chance for complete and certain cure is remote; to know that one can never be absolutely sure that he or she is entirely free from the infection; to know that one may pass the disease to his beloved mate and even to his children; to know or to believe that one's friends would withdraw from him as they would from a leper if they were aware of the facts is to set up a situation in the mind of the victim that has no equal as an instrument of torture. Serious as are the other effects of venereal disease, this must be set first as a cause of suffering." 1.

The following is one example in which syphilis was the basis of strained relations in the family.

> "The baby was desperately ill with congenital syphilis. The husband and his family had blamed the mother, who was however, apparently healthy and unwilling to admit guilt. A blood test showed that she did have syphilis, but since she was not known to have been irregular in her sex relations, the husband, too, was induced to have an examination. The results showed him also to be syphilitic;

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1. Rice, Thurman B., "The Venereal Diseases," p. 9

whereupon he confessed that he was responsible for the misery of his wife and baby. This acknowledgment together with prolonged medical treatment restored the family unity which had been rapidly breaking down." 1.

Mental Diseases

Mental diseases and mental deficiency have their toll of marital unhappiness. Of course not all the feeble-minded or those of low-grade intelligence are social misfits. Many are relatively adjusted socially. However, there are many others whose deficient mentality is accompanied by temperamental and emotional instability and who are queer, foolish, undependable, irresponsible, and infantile. It is not difficult to imagine tensions which might arise where such individuals are concerned.

"Mental disease, with its hallucinations, delusions, possibilities of false accusations and of changes in behavior, has destroyed the happiness and comfort of many a home. Such alterations in personality as a change from cleanliness to slovliness, from gentleness to cruelty, from thrift to extravagance, may be a sign of approaching insanity which should receive attention before there is a dangerous outbreak." 2.

Professor Lichtenberger says that with mental diseases,

"as in the case of degenerative physical diseases, we find the main sources of marital tensions, not in complete dementia or in advanced stages of mental breakdown where compassion is evoked and sympathetic care is bestowed, but in the mild or incipient forms connected with behavior situations or processes in which the symptoms are misunderstood

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1. Queen, S. A. and Mann, D. M., Social Pathology, p. 460
2. Wile, Ira S. and Winn, M. D., Marriage in the Modern Manner, p. 83

> and often are interpreted in terms of moral culpability or other character defects." 1.

Insanity, involving prolonged institutional commitment, is a ground for divorce in eleven States. However, very few divorces in the United States are granted on this ground. There were 103 in 1924 and 136 in 1929.

The following are a few of the mental ailments which, although they may not result in behavior commonly known as insanity, may be productive of conduct disorders of serious nature: hallucinations, delusions, illusions, obsessions, traumatic psychoses, paresis, alcoholic or drug psychoses, manic-depressive psychoses, melancholia, dementia praecox, and psychoneuroses.

It is evident that health, though not absolutely necessary, certainly contributes to married happiness. The authors of Marriage in the Modern Manner maintain that

> "Health is the very core of marital adjustment. It is intimately concerned in every aspect of marriage, in the social activities of the two partners, in their financial arrangements, and in their sexual life....Health in marriage is reflected in harmony and beauty of living." 2.

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 407
2. Wile, I. S. and Winn, M. D., Marriage in the Modern Manner, p. 84

CHAPTER VIII

SEX MALADJUSTMENT

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SEX MALADJUSTMENT

Because of the complexity of human behavior it is impossible to get conclusive statistical proof for causes or results in any particular field of behavior. Especially is this true in the sex life for it has been only quite recently that any attempts have been made for an intelligent understanding of this side of life. Since the sex factor plays such an important part in life, we present the following paragraphs expressing the opinions of various authorities as to the place it plays in marital maladjustment.

Professor Paul Popenoe says,

> "Approaching a little nearer to individual broken homes, it will be found that at the bottom of most of them (some students have said 90 per cent or more) there is the fundamental problem of sexual maladjustment. People who are perfectly adjusted to each other in this respect do not seek separation, either by desertion or divorce. This fact frequently does not transpire in cases of publicity; frequently, indeed, discordant partners themselves do not realize just what the trouble is. But lawyers and judges who hear many divorce petitions know that this is the truth. It is safe to say that sexual maladjustment plays a part in almost every divorce, and that it is the most important factor in a majority, even though not known to be such by the parties concerned." 1.

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1. Popenoe, P., The Conservation of the Family, pp. 79-80

Mr. Arthur Garfield Hays, an outstanding member of the bar who has had wide experience in the divorce courts states:

> "Most rationalists will agree that while marriage may not always be successful if sex relations are satisfactory, yet it will certainly be a failure if they are not....No doubt the psychologist or psychoanalist will find the root of most marital troubles in the sex factor as between the husband and wife. Yet this is never the alleged ground for divorce. If it is the real ground, it is sought to be covered as a phase of incompatibility or as related to cruelty, or is included in one of the recognized legal categories.
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> "It will be seen that legislators avoid the direct question of sexual relations between husband and wife. Yet laws are framed and interpreted, at least in the more liberal states, so that mismated couples are able to come within their terms....The law does not specifically provide for divorce on the ground of incompatibility; certainly not on the ground of sexual dissatisfaction. Yet extreme cruelty covers a host of dissatisfactions...Incompatibility or cruelty is proved by what the parties have done and said, usually in the presence of a witness. The maid may testify that the husband threw the 'God Bless Our Home' at his wife. The psychologist, psychoanalist, or wise judge knows that the indignity was the effect rather than the cause." 1.

Professor Ernest Mowrer concludes from his studies that:

> "The sex factor is probably more commonly the cause of family discord than would appear on the surface. People are not accustomed to talk frankly about sex. Even between husband and wife there is often a decided reserve in any discussion in this sphere of their relations. It is doubtful if the average husband and wife themselves realize the importance of sexual adjustment in promoting harmonious adjustment in other relations." 2.

Mr. Ralph de Pomerai states:

> "The sexual relationship is a comparatively small thing in marriage if it is satisfactory,...

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1. Calvertson and Schmalhausen, Sex in Civilization, p. 221-224
2. Mowrer, E., Family Disorganization, p. 197

but a very big thing if it is not all right. In point of fact, moreover, the real underlying cause of most marital unhappiness and divorce is invariably sexual discontent." 1.

Dr. Hamilton found in his study of one hundred marriages that the greatest single complaint with regard to marriage unhappiness among women was over sexual matters while men placed temperamental difficulties first and sexual second. 2. He comments as follows:

> "There is plenty of friction in married life quite apart from troubles over the purely sexual side. To many people the non-sexual difficulties bulk much larger than these that arise when a man and a woman try to bring into harmony the demands, capacities, habits, prejudices, and antagonisms involved in the intimate sexual adjustment of marriage. Indeed most of the men and women of this research were inclined to look elsewhere for the main source of their troubles. Yet it would take a very prejudiced and a very reckless psychiatrist to say that most married friction doesn't find its source in sexual maladjustment. At any rate, the frictions which arise from other difficulties would be ignored in many, many cases if the sexual relation itself were more satisfactory." 3.

Dr. Davis believes that,

> "In married life the sex relationship, both in its physical and emotional aspects, indisputably plays the major part." 4.

In the preceding paragraphs we have given the opinions of people generally recognized as informed in this field. As

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1. de Pomerai, Ralph, Marriage, p. 226. Quoted in Lichtenberger, Divorce, p. 385
2. Hamilton and Macgowan, What is Wrong with Marriage, p. 279-280
3. Ibid, p. 88
4. Davis, Katherine, Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-two Hundred Women, Quoted in Lichtenberger, p. 384

was said before, it is practically impossible with our present means of investigation to determine the extent that sexual maladjustment plays in marital disharmony. Even if the exact number of cases could be determined in which it is a factor, it would be so intricately interwoven with other factors that it would be impossible to be accurate as to its relative importance. But there is little doubt but that the sex factor is very important in domestic maladjustment.

Childhood Conditioning

Misinformation and Faulty Impressions. Life is not composed of various periods of a few months or years set off schematically by themselves as though each period were a separate entity in itself. It is now a scientifically recognized fact that every experience, physical and mental, through which an individual passes influences all his subsequent life. An apparently identical experience will not be the same to any two individuals because the heredity and environment of no two persons is the same. An experience that may lead to inhibitions, repressions, and a neurosis for one might apparently little affect another life. It is now known that a child's sex life does not spontaneously mature from unfolding of inner forces but it is conditioned from the social environment.

Even now with the stress that is being placed on sane sex education, it is difficult for one to pass through childhood without his attitudes and emotions being colored in such a way as to make sex adjustment difficult in adult life. There are

many ways in which are made faulty early impressions - impressions which often persist even in spite of re-education.

Attitude and source

More frequently than not a healthy sex curiosity has had to be satisfied by information from companions who because of their ignorance considered it something vile and indecent and explained it in a revolting manner and under circumstances that were thoroughly disgusting. Some have withdrawn into secret places and interpreted as best they could information given in the family medical book. Others, have gathered their standards, attitudes, and ideals from the movie thriller, the love column, the latest news scandal, obscene literature, the neighborhood wise guy, and inscriptions on the walls of public toilets.

Children have been forced to seek information in such harmful manner because of the taboo placed on sex and the negative attitude adopted by most adults. Because of these attitudes of adults children get "an impression that there is something shameful about sex and that impression sinks into the unconscious part of their minds to bear fruit in future days or remains in consciousness as one of the three following lies:

1. That there is something about birth concerning which it is wrong to desire knowledge.

2. That there is a relation between men and women that is a furtive and grimy secret.

3. That there are parts of our bodies that are disgusting and shameful." [1]

Thus,

> "children from earliest infancy have been taught either negatively, through the 'conspiracy of silence' or positively, by innuendo or by direct affirmation that sex is vile; that certain parts of the body are indecent; that any thoughts about, allusion to, or discussion of, sex is obscene; that there are natural feelings and impulses of which they are to be ashamed. They have been lied to persistently about where babies come from, and these lies have been labeled 'white' because told in the supposed interest of morality."[2].

In this way a tragic pattern-attitude in regard to sex, toward persons of the opposite sex, toward parents, toward sex experience, and toward marriage has been built up. For the most part this pattern-attitude is so ingrained in the personality that it is impossible for the average young person to enter marriage rationally.

William J. Fielding in commenting on sex ignorance says:

> "Many of the difficulties, trials and mistakes of marriage are the direct results of prudery or a false ideology on questions pertaining to the most vital and intimate facts of life...To expect a normally successful marriage under these circumstances, without more or less serious disorders or preventable diseases, bitter emotional conflicts and nervous or temperamental disturbances, proves that we have been as puerile in our credulity as we have been criminally irrational in our education standards...Sex, because of its forbidden status, has been the world-wide butt for loose jesting, a thing of humiliation, partly repellent and indecent, but yet, in its primal importance, intensely alluring."3.

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1. Weatherhead, Leslie D., The Mastery of Sex Through Psychology and Religion, p. 13
2. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 371
3. Fielding, W. J., Sanity in Sex, p. 211

Another source of unfortunate attitudes arises when a husband and wife are not happy. A child soon detects this, and sooner or later as the rift grows greater the child is forced to take sides. Frequently, in such circumstances, the wife clings to the child and seeks emotional satisfactions through him when she finds her affection for her husband slipping. Then, even though not intentional, she influences the child by her ideas and attitudes on sex and marriage. In such an unhappy home environment a boy may lose respect for women; and a girl under such influences may come to have a low opinion of her father and later of men in general. Thus an unhappy marital life of a husband and wife may so color the ideas and attitudes of their children as to make difficult or improbable a satisfactory adjustment in the children's marriages.

Harmful Connotations

Often in childhood because of the source of information, the kind of information, or the circumstances under which the information is given disagreeable connotations are developed in regard to sex. For example, a child is rebuked, punished, or ridiculed for inquiry about sex or for handling the sex organs. This leads the child to regard it as something evil in itself and something that must be avoided. He builds a defense by a feeling of shame or by creating disgust. This conditioning is all the more severe because of the attendant emotionalism. Frequently such conditioning builds a guilt feeling in regard to all things

sexual; and when marriage occurs and the problems of physical adjustment arise, this conflict caused by a guilt feeling becomes more severe than previously.

Teachings or experiences which cause a feeling of disgust toward sex make adjustment difficult if not impossible. Dr. Hamilton found in his investigation that about half of the women failed to reach a satisfactory climax in the sex act; and his investigation indicated that this was due largely to fear or disgust of sex ingrained in them as little girls. [1.] This disgust attitude may be the result of any one of numerous experiences; back-alley information, shock, sex aggression in childhood, and social attitudes.

One form of bad conditioning which is closely tied up with a feeling of disgust is what Professor Groves calls a "psychic rape." [2.] This is usually caused by an attempt of a perverted adult to shock the child or hurt his sensibilities. Such an experience is made the more serious because of the intensity of the parent's reaction toward it.

A disagreeable connotation that is sometimes made is caused by the fact that the organs of sex and those of elimination are located so near each other. Any attitude of disgust toward excretion or the organs of elimination is apt also to embrace sex because of the close proximity of the sex organs.

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What is Wrong with Marriage, p. 284
2. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 211

Another unfortunate conditioning which a child often receives is through information, intentionally given or not as the case may be, which stresses the dangers of sex and thus establishes a fear concerning it. Adults frequently instill in children a fear of sex as a means of protecting them and restraining their curiosity. Pregnancy and venereal diseases are the favorite aspects of sex used in this manner. To one who has never experienced this fear it is almost unbelievable the intense suffering a girl may endure who has but a vague idea as to how pregnancy occurs and how venereal diseases may be contracted.

Fear Association

Fear of childbearing is another type of fear that often becomes associated with sex in childhood conditioning. This is usually accidental where the child is introduced to cases of suffering during labor, expression of dread by women who face childbirth, or death from childbirth. Such experiences tend to build up a fear which becomes associated with sex.

These fears are a menace to later life and to marital adjustment because of their strong emotional attachments. Even when the individual comes to have a healthy, intelligent, attitude toward these fears, it is practically impossible to eradicate them. Childbearing and pregnancy are dreaded and this fear prevents satisfactory sex relations.

It often occurs that where there is a marital dissatisfaction which has its roots in sex, the origin of the difficulty is not recognized, especially

Misinterpretation of Sex Dissatisfaction

when the cause is due to faulty conditioning in childhood. A wife who finds herself irritable in her household duties or subject to chronic headaches is not apt to suspect that the cause is a sex dissatisfaction although this may be the case; or a husband is not likely to recognize his mood of sexual origin when he finds himself frequently despondent and cross and lacking affection. Even when the husband or wife or both feel that the dissatisfaction is from an improper sex adjustment, seldom are the experiences of childhood considered in their true significance.

Anyone in an emotional conflict seeks some kind of a solution. When this conflict is due to marital difficulties caused by childhood conditioning of sex, seldom is the true cause recognized. However, this emotional disturbance must be settled so, lacking a knowledge of the real cause, the individual is apt to rationalize and find an explanation of his own. This misinterpretation may be made in any number of ways.[1.]

The first is an attempt to remove sex from personal experience. Sex is considered base; a resistance which leads to an ascetic ideal is built up against sex itself. Substitutions are made for sex. Under such conditions a proper adjustment becomes impossible, for the marriage partners grow apart physically and emotionally to a place where normal marital relations cannot be resumed.

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1. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 195.

Another misinterpretation results in laying the blame upon the partner. Sometimes this may be true, but frequently the one finding fault is the responsible person. Dr. Hamilton, in referring to the husbands in his investigation, comments as follows:

> "....So when their marriages did not give them the emotional and physical satisfactions which they fundamentally needed and craved, they didn't know that they should blame themselves first of all, and back of that their parents. All they could see were their partners in misfortune. And so they blamed their wives." 1.

Whether the husband or wife be at fault recrimination tends to increase the tension rather than bring about a solution.

Another reaction which is usually due to childhood conditioning is the individual considers himself or herself to have excessive or deficient sex character. The former is usually the man's reaction while the latter is more often the woman's.

In either case it often goes back to childhood impressions that sex is base and degraded and that the more one can dispense with sex the higher the plane on which he or she lives.

Parent Fixation. Parent fixation is another product of childhood conditioning which may make domestic adjustment difficult. Such a fixation may be apparent in other aspects of the married relation than sex; but where it is present, it will almost always eventually manifest itself in the sex life.

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 45ff.

Whether due to a parent fixation or other causes an abnormal difficulty in breaking from family ties endangers the marriage. Conditions are furnished for emotional conflict which make a proper adjustment difficult. The mere fact that an individual has lived away from home is not proof that he has become sufficiently emotionally independent of his family to satisfactorily adjust in marriage.

By parent fixation is meant an infantile emotional dependence on one or both of the parents, but usually only one. It is now commonly referred to as a "mother complex." In the phrase of Freudianism it is known as Oedipus Rex complex, immature dependence of son on mother, or Electra complex, a dependence of daughter on the father. It is popularly expressed in the words "tied to his mother's apron strings."

The parent complex is more frequently that of a mother complex of a son rather than the dependence of a daughter on a father. The development of a mother complex is caused by a child having too much of a good thing. It is carrying the expression of the natural dependence and affection to a degree which prohibits the child's developing emotionally beyond his attitudes of childhood and prevents his loving any other woman in a natural, grown-up way.

As has been intimated there are degrees of parent fixation varying in results from mother-in-law difficulties, jealousy, and sex difficulties, to loss of affection because the partner does not resemble physically the parent of the opposite sex.

Dr. Hamilton found in his study that the happiest group of men had wives on the mother-pattern, yet the unconscious fear of inbreeding made them marry away from the mother. Likewise the women tended to find happiness with a man who resembled the father, but fear of incest and inbreeding tended to make the women marry away from the father-pattern. His study further revealed that 94 per cent of the men were happy whose wives resembled their mothers physically and 60 per cent of the women were happy whose husbands resembled their fathers physically.[1.]

This same investigation classifies unhappily married people into two groups: those who are matrimonial incompetents and can never find happiness with any mate and those who are merely mismated. First among the incompetents is listed,

> "the man who is the victim of the 'terrible mother,' the maternal vampire and high priestess of 'mother love' who wrecks marriages a score of years before their beginning. Sometimes she is an unloved wife, but more typically a woman whose false purity of soul...will not permit her to have a normal sex life with her husband. The wife who cannot win her husband's love ties her son to her in his place. The 'pure' mother finds a substitute for what her sinful original nature craves by over-loving her little boy. Either type of woman shows such a passion for the helpless young male that he is rendered incapable of giving anything like a normal, ungrudging love to any other woman." 2.

While Dr. Hamilton found that many husbands are ruined by a mother-fixation, his study showed that,

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What is Wrong with Marriage, Chapter IX, X
2. Ibid, p. 291

> "Fathers seldom get a chance to absorb their daughter's emotions so much that they never love any other man." 1.

In concluding this section on childhood conditioning the following quotation from What Is Wrong with Marriage seems quite appropriate:

> "The many marriages of this study leave but one vivid and sure impression - the sense that most husbands and wives have been so warped by the training and environment of their childhood that they can do little today to better their condition. Indeed, there in the hopeless dilemma of these thwarted people lies the only incontrovertible conclusion of this research: The proper attitude of the parents toward the child is the only sure cure for the ills of matrimony today. And it will not take effect for twenty years." 2.

Inadequate Sex Knowledge

Most of the authorities consulted seem to agree that ignorance, inadequate knowledge, or false information, if not the prime causes of marital difficulties, are surely frequent causes; and although this lack of correct understanding may not be recognized on the surface, it is very often the basis of tensions. Ignorance and false information are interrelated and inter-dependent with the factors discussed in the other sections of this chapter. They cannot be isolated by themselves.

One of the first places where this ignorance is evident is in the failure to recognize that sex desire is a human trait not a masculine characteristic. The conception of sexual

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 295
2. Ibid, p. 287

activity as a masculine function with the woman a passive partner is not easily or quickly changed, and is still preventing happiness for many couples.

Dr. Exner says

> "....Male ignorance and disregard of woman's sexual capacities and needs is obviously a prime factor in the apparent coldness of women and the maladjustments that grow out of the unequal sexual relationships." 1.

Again this author observes:

> "It is well known that while sexuality in women manifests itself differently than it does in men, women's sexual needs and capacities are wholly comparable to those of men. Indeed, full climactic experience for women in marriage is even more important to their happiness and their physical, mental and emotional health than it is for men, because sex is more intimately tied up with the whole emotional life of woman and irradiates more fully her whole personality." 2.

Of course the fault cannot be assigned to men any more than to women for both have suffered from the false belief which many women have, that sex is something that must be endured and that it is for the enjoyment of men only. Others have the idea that it is degrading for a woman to display any signs of passion. Most of these tragic illusions are the result of childhood conditioning - a product of social attitudes and teachings of prudery and false ideology. But whatever the cause, the failure to recognize the sexual needs and rights of woman cuts deeply at the roots of marital love and harmony.

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 97
2. Ibid, p. 23

A lack of understanding of the physical body may cause much trouble. Mr. Weatherhead gives the following illustrations which show the extent to which this ignorance may go:

> "....We have come across cases of men who married entirely in ignorance of the fact that a woman once a month passes through a physical crisis which has its repercussions in her nervous system. One such ignorant husband imagined his wife had injured herself in some way. Another imagined his wife has contracted a disease. The embarrassment and hurt feelings engendered by such ignorance it is easy to imagine, however hard to express. On the other hand a mother not infrequently allows her daughter to marry in ignorance of what the act in which marriage is physically consummated really is. The consequence is she is frequently repelled, shocked, and horrified when union is desired." 1.

Then there is also an ignorance of the structure and purpose of the sexual organs of both the man and the woman and a failure to recognize that a woman' s sex life is more complicated, more diffused, and more elaborate than a man's. In men sex desire is fairly uniform. It lies close to the surface and is easily aroused and quickly satisfied. In women sex desire is more variable. It lies deeper and is more slowly satisfied.

Too often the sex experience is considered to be only physical and the emotional and intellectual sides of the sex act are disregarded; but a failure to adjust in any one aspect will lessen the success in the other two. The thinking and feeling sides of the sex life are as much involved as the physical.

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1. Weatherhead, L.D., The Mastery of Sex Through Psychology and Religion, p. 17 and 18

In discussing this Dr. Exner says:

> "A too direct, too exclusively physical approach to coitus is one of the most common and most baneful factors in marital maladjustments. Every single act, if it is to be a truly shared experience, an act that has something of spiritual significance, calls for a prelude, for courtship and wooing. It requires exercises of what Havelock Ellis has so aptly called 'the play-function of sex.'....It is the greatest mistake to assume that courtship and wooing may cease at or soon after the wedding. If it ceases, marriage loses its romance, and such a marriage tends to become commonplace, or an irritating limitation of life, or to go on the rocks." 1.

This same authority lists as one of the most prevalent factors in marital maladjustments the inability of the husband to prolong the sex act so that the wife as well as he can be satisfied. This inability may have physical or psychic causes or a combination of both; but where the disability becomes chronic the marriage relationship is apt to become torture for the woman or for both the husband and wife.

In Dr. Hamilton's investigation in response to the inquiry "Do you believe that your orgasms occur too quickly for your wife's pleasure?" fifty-five of the hundred husbands answered in the affirmative. Only twenty-eight answered with an unqualified, "No."

In reply to the question, "Do you believe that your husband's orgasms occur too quickly for your own pleasure?" forty-eight of the hundred wives answered, "Yes." Only thirty-three answered with an unqualified, "No." 2.

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 101
2. Ibid, p. 114

Some of the factors that contribute to a too quick emission in men are nervousness, which may be due to awkwardness, haste, anticipation of failure, or an unsympathetic attitude on the part of the wife; fear - fear of failure, fear of pregnancy, or fear of the wife's reaction; inadequate erection; inadequate lubrication; and wrong technique including haste and failure in the art of love-making. [1.]

When a wife repeatedly fails to have an orgasm, whatever the cause, there will develop tensions which may produce irritability, general nervousness, and depression. Mr. Butterfield comments on the great importance of satisfactory release:

> "The nervous tension when a woman is repeatedly brought to even a moderate degree of sexual excitement and left without adequate means of release is a painful matter and much more serious than many appreciate. Many otherwise happy marriages have been wrecked because the husband and wife did not know the importance of the woman's release and how to bring it about." 2.

Another factor which frequently enters into maladjustments is the ignorance of or the failure to respect the periodicity of desire in woman. If a man is ignorant of this rhythm in women, much friction and unhappiness may arise as a result; for he is unable to understand what to him seems merely a temperamental mood.

There are numerous other factors due to misunderstanding and lack of information that lead to marital difficulties or

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 117 ff.
2. Butterfield, O. M., Marriage, p. 32

prevent the attaining of happiness that should be expected. Among these are: the belief that sexual union is for reproduction only; the failure to realize the importance of the environment and attendant circumstances to the sex act; fears and inhibitions; physical difficulties which in most cases can be eliminated with the aid of a physician; the false belief that a woman's sex life ends with menopause; frigidity, either physical or psychic; and above all the ignorance in the art and technique of love.

Physical Difficulties

The most frequent physical difficulty which affects marital maladjustment is a tough or unruptured hymen. The serious nature of this structural obstacle lies in its probability of causing the first sex experience in marriage to be painful. This may lead the wife to revolt against sex and everything connected with it, especially if she has had an unfortunate earlier conditioning.

> "Even though she later becomes tolerant in accepting this part of marriage as an obligation from which she cannot escape, she may never rid herself of the deep-seated repugnance that will destroy both for her and for her husband the possibilities of satisfactory sex adjustment." 1.

There may be other structural defects which make it almost impossible for the wife to have a satisfactory experience until the difficulty is corrected. They are usually cared for easily by a physician. The danger is in a failure to recognize

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1. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 242

the trouble and the postponement in seeking surgical assistance until the trouble has caused serious problems.

Physical hindrances to pregnancy where pregnancy is desired may cause domestic dissatisfaction. Some of these hindrances are: a displaced uterus, sterility of the husband, closed tubes, and hyper-acidity of the vagina.

Other sex difficulties of physical origin may be caused by inflammation of the internal or external organs of generation, disorder in the endocrine glands, vaginismus which is a condition of muscular spasm of the vagina which obstructs or prevents male entry, and infrequent cases of physical impotence of men. Experience and investigations have shown that where the woman has painful coitus and there is no apparent structural difficulty, the cause is usually psychic. Dr. Exner observes that dyspareunia or painful coitus is in effect but another form of frigidity. [1.]

Fear of Pregnancy and Childbirth

The fear of pregnancy is a common cause of marital difficulty. The couple may seek to avoid pregnancy for a number of reasons such as, too frequent pregnancies, the wife's health, economic conditions, no desire for children, fear of transmitting a disease, or the fear of the ordeal of childbirth. Concommitant with the fear of pregnancy must be considered birth control, including antagonistic religious

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 147

scruples, unsatisfactory contraceptive methods, and inadequate information as to the methods.

The following are views of various authorities as to the importance of this fear.

Mr. Fielding observes:

> "Another great factor in domestic infelicity is the fear on the part of the wife of undesired or too frequent impregnation, and the bearing of more children than she feels her health able to stand, or that can properly be taken care of and educated. In these instances where there is a lack of knowledge of practical contraceptive measures, and either an attempt to use methods that are injurious or the will on the part of the wife to avoid sexual relations as an alternative, there are bound to be unfortunate results. Improper methods of preventing conception, which interfere with the normal acts of coitus, frequently have very harmful results on the nervous system of either or both parties, sometimes causing neurasthenia with its strain of emotional and psychic disorders, and disharmoniaing subsequences. And any prolonged attempt to withdraw from participation in sexual conjugality will prove certain disaster to the marriage." 1.

Dr. Exner says:

> "If marital happiness and health are to be assured, the fear of pregnancy must not be allowed to hang as a sword suspended by a thread over the marital bed, at such times when pregnancy definitely does not fit into the life scheme of the couple....In the interest of marital success and happiness the question of the use of contraceptives must be faced and settled.."2.

Professor Groves lists fear of pregnancy as one of the psychic causes of marital difficulty. He writes:

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1. Fielding, W. J., Sanity in Sex, p. 212 ff.
2. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 153

> "Fear of pregnancy operates...in lessening sex pleasure and occasionally in making it so fearful that satisfactory adjustment is not possible. The danger of this has been so impressed upon marriage consultants that many of them advocate the use of contraceptives during the first month of marriage even though the wife and husband both intend to have children. It is found that if the thought of immediate pregnancy is associated in the thought of the woman with her first sex experiences, she cannot easily adjust to the latter." 1.

He also gives as a psychic cause trouble arising from either the husband's or the wife's unfavorable reaction to the method of contraception which they use. This is most likely to occur among those who do not have a modern knowledge of contraception.

Professor Lichtenberger asserts that:

> "To the extent to which safe and satisfactory methods are employed and sex relations are dis-associated from the normal physical consequences of procreation, the result is to eliminate the element of fear with its 'frustrations and harmful emotional tensions,' and to increase the enjoyments of married life so essential to congeniality and compatibility, and thus to contribute definitely to marriage stability." 2.

Dr. Hamilton found in his investigation that friction over the question of having children was not a frequent one among the educated class, and his study also showed that some form of contraception was practically always used. He also indicated what is obvious that unless some effective means of birth control is used, the average couple must make a choice between having a large family or they must so limit their

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1. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 244
2. Lichtenberger, J. P. Divorce, p. 354

physical relations as to cause serious frustrations and harmful emotional tensions, which are bound to lead to unhappiness and perhaps to the destruction of their love and their marriage.[1.]

The fear of pregnancy is also known to be a common cause of frigidity in women.

There are problems which arise as a result of pregnancy itself. Women vary greatly in their mental reactions to pregnancy. Sometimes it is a marked irritability, but other times a depression, or a restless instability. In some women the mental instability ranges from a fear to a temporary insanity. Many times the husband does not recognize the cause or sympathize with the mental reactions of his wife during her pregnancy. In finding her changed and irritable, he may search for a motive and decide that she blames him for the pregnancy or is unhappy because she is pregnant or even regrets her marriage. In his failure to understand the condition he may criticize his wife or become angry himself thus increasing the tension.

Fear of pregnancy may be due also to a fear of the birth experience which is usually rooted from childhood conditioning.

Sexual Frigidity

There is little doubt but that frigidity is a frequent cause of marital tensions. It may be the result of other tensions or the effect of a failure to adjust in other aspects

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1. Quoted and paraphrased from Hamilton and Macgowan, What is Wrong with Marriage, p. 93-96

of marriage; or it may be the cause of manifestations of maladjustment, as irritability and neurasthenia. Professor Dearborn declares that more frequently than not when one or both of a couple come to him complaining of disharmony, they give frigidity as a cause. [1.] William Fielding gives artificial frigidity of the woman as one of two common causes of lack of sexual harmony in marriage.[2.]

According to Dr. Hamilton the possible causes of frigidity in women are: structurally defective sex organs, other physiologically defects as disorders of endocrine glands; inept or impotent husband; fear of pregnancy; lack of love for her husband or a discord between the woman and her husband; conviction that sex desire is wrong or shameful; physically painful first experience; revolting first experience; a taboo of sex through childhood conditioning. Of these possible causes his studies show that the most likely is early negative conditioning.[3.]

Dr. Exner lists among the factors which cause frigidity: common ignorance; a want of understanding of one another's sexual constitution and even of their own; a social heritage of compulsions and attitudes; crude, unintelligent method;

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1. Dearborn, L., From Class Notes in course, "Sex Factors in Human Relations," Feb. 13, 1935
2. Fielding, W. J., Sanity in Sex, p. 194
3. Hamilton and Macgowan, "What Is Wrong with Marriage," p. 204

quick emission; no knowledge and regard for periodicity of desire; and complete ignorance of the art of love.[1.]

Mr. Weatherhead states that

> "Impotence and sterility are causes of much domestic unhappiness and much unfaithfulness. Often they are caused by structural defects which can easily be put right by a competent doctor. The over-use of alcohol and tobacco sometimes causes both impotence and sterility. Concussion, obesity, venereal disease, and excessive sexual indulgence have been classed among physical causes. Exhaustion due to overwork or pressure is frequently a cause. The commonest psychological cause in men is a fear that when marriage comes it may find them unable to do their part."2.

Most of the authorities seem to agree that absolute frigidity where the woman is definitely anaesthetic sexually is rare, and that the cause is more frequently psychic than physical.

Havelock Ellis observes that

> "The chief reason why women are considered 'frigid' lies less in themselves than in men." 3.

Dr. Hamilton's investigations seem to indicate that some of the results of a lack of climax or orgasm are: extravagance, ill health, weariness, irritability, infidelity and sexual restlessness and unhappiness.[4.] From his study of a hundred married women he concluded that somewhere between a third and a half of married women never feel a climax. Of

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1. Exner, M. J., "The Sexual Side of Marriage," p. 146
2. Weatherhead, L. D., The Mastery of Sex Through Psychology and Religion, p. 226
3. Ellis, Havelock, Psychology of Sex, p. 309
4. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 225-226

this particular hundred women, forty-six could not reach the climax and of these twenty were seriously neurotic; while of the fifty-four who had orgasms only one was nervously ill.

In this same research the failure to enjoy the climax was far more often associated with adultery than with happy marriages. Almost two-thirds of the adulterous women had never experienced the climax.

In this same connection, Dr. Beale reminds us that

> "The man who has what he calls a frigid wife at home....will sooner or later be tempted to seek consolation elsewhere." 1.

while Dr. Hamilton comments that

> "Consequent and acute dissatisfaction with married life on the part of such women, in ignorance of the cause of their own ineptitude and believing it to be due to physiological mismating, themselves not infrequently turn to extramarital adventures in search....of more satisfying experience." 2.

From this brief discussion of frigidity it seems obvious that such a condition may be the result of other tensions which it only serves to intensify.

Sexual Deviations

Undoubtedly sexual deviations have a part in the unhappiness of the married, but we are gradually coming to realize that "what we call a 'perversion,' when not carried to an extreme point is....'often found as a normal constituent in the lives of normal individuals." 3. For example, sadistic and

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 373
2. Ibid, p. 373
3. Ellis, Havelock, Psychology of Sex, p. 214

masochistic tendencies are found in the normal individual.

Homosexuality is a prevalent "deviation" which affects marriage. There are three types of homosexuality: the true invert, the acquired, and the substitutive. Something can usually be done for the acquired and substitutive types so that an adjustment can be made to marriage, but it is improbable that the first type will ever be adjusted in marriage.

Havelock Ellis says:

> "It is not unusual to find inverts marrying. But it is desirable that such marriages should not be made in the dark or with illusory hopes. The conjugal partner should not be too young, and should be accurately informed beforehand, as to the precise condition of affairs and the probable prospects. Unions so formed sometimes prove tolerable and even happy, should the couple be congenial to each other. But it must always be remembered that the chances of complete sexual satisfaction on either side are small. The invert, unless genuinely bisexual...cannot experience with a person of the opposite sex that intimate unreserve and emotional extravagance which are the essence of sexual love, and though potency is possible it may only be secured by imagining that the partner is of the same sex or even by concentrating the thoughts on some attractive individual of the same sex. This state of things fails to give great satisfaction to the inverted partner while the other partner, even if not clearly conscious of the imperfect character of the relationship, instinctively feels some degree of dissatisfaction and depression, if not repulsion." 1.

As far as masturbation is concerned, authorities vary in opinion from considering it in therapeutic terms to believing it signifies a definitely neurotic trend. However, those who

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1. Ellis, Havelock, Psychology of Sex, p. 250, 251

are in a position to understand the situation best, now usually consider that the danger in masturbation is in a consciousness of guilt, a fear of the mental and physical consequences, and a feeling of sin. Such attitudes may be the basic cause of frigidity. Another danger in the practice of masturbating is the individual may become so conditioned in receiving satisfactions and release in this way that after marriage it may be difficult to have satisfactory sex relations.

Dr. Hamilton found in his study that sixty-two percent of those women who never masturbated now have the climax; fifty-one percent who masturbated at some time now have the climax, and twenty-seven percent who masturbated frequently after marriage now have the climax. He observes that

> "Some physicians believe that masturbation is a cause of sexual disability. So far as women are concerned, it seems to be associated with this lack of climax; but it is much easier to believe that masturbation, like adultery, is more apt to be a result than a cause." 1.

On the other hand, Kathryn Davis found that those women who masturbated before marriage adjusted themselves more easily to marriage. 2.

Extra-Marital Relations

Extra-marital relations include both premarital and adultery and vary from premarital experience with but one member

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 227
2. Dearborn, Lester, From Class Notes in "Sex Factors in Human Relations."

of the opposite sex, probably the fiance or fiancee, to general promiscuity and a long standing practice of patronizing prostitutes.

Opinions on the effect of premarital experience likewise range from the traditional to the liberal and radical. There are those who hold that premarital promiscuity tends to overemphasize sex, fosters deterioration of character, builds up a taste for sexual variety that is incompatible with marriage happiness, prevents the deepest intimacy of lovers because they cannot enter marriage chaste, and increases venereal disease. These conditions are considered a jeopardy to marriage happiness.

However, there are others who maintain a different view. They hold that the biological urge of sex is inherently neither moral nor immoral, that the deterioration of character from extra-marital relations is due to mental conflicts caused by perverse sex instruction and to the violation of sex mores and not to the experiences themselves, and that sex repression frequently leads to physiological and psychological consequences of serious character. [1.]

In referring to men who have had experiences with promiscuous women, Dr. Exner says:

> "Having gained their conception and experience of sex relations in such connections and on such a plane, the tendency is to carry over into marriage the atmosphere, attitudes, ideas, technique and

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1. Lichtenberger, J. P., Divorce, p. 356-357

> habits acquired, with the result that they mess up the whole situation. Unquestionably the crudities, the selfishness and the excesses which so largely shock and freeze women into frigidity have a source in premarital experience of this type." 1.

This same writer feels that premarital experiences among acquaintances who are not necessarily promiscuous differ in degree rather than in kind from promiscuous experiences and that such relations are self-seeking and self-regarding only in a lesser degree.

Professor Groves maintains that

> "An attempt to build up two different sorts of sex, one for the prostitute and one for all other women, does not work out." 2.

As far as marriage happiness is concerned he observes that promiscuous relations tend to develop a revolt against the physical aspect of marriage so that love comes to be antagonistic to it; or they either lead to a marriage which is an attempt to legalize passion or develop an indifference to intimate, affectionate fellowship.

Dr. Hamilton correlated premarital sex experience with degree of satisfaction in marriage and found that a considerably higher percentage of those who were virgin at marriage had a greater degree of satisfaction in marriage than those who had had premarital sex experience. He also found in his study of the two hundred men and women that adultery and married unhappiness were definitely associated, but he was unable

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 162
2. Groves, E. R., Marriage, p. 230

to tell whether the act of adultery corrupted the happiness of marriage, the lack of happiness resulted in adultery, or both unhappiness and adultery were products of an earlier experience.[1]

In considering extra-marital relations and their effect on happiness in marriage, we must remember the danger of venereal diseases with their sinister trail of desecrated individuals and broken homes which were discussed more fully in Chapter VII.

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1. Hamilton and Macgowan, What Is Wrong with Marriage, p. 234 ff.

CHAPTER IX

OTHER CAUSES OF MALADJUSTMENT

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Childless Marriages

We shall now treat but briefly a few factors not previously considered which may be causes of unhappiness in marriage. First among these is the childless union, termed by Professor Groves the arrested family and by Dr. Knight as the companionate. The childless marriage may be one by choice or it may be involuntary because of sterility or because of some other inability to have children. In cases of maladjustment in childless families it is almost impossible to determine whether or not the absence of children is a contributing factor to the unhappiness.

At times marriage that was consummated with the agreement that it be childless gets into difficulty because one of the members becomes unwilling to keep the premarriage agreement. There may have been no honest commitment at any time by the one member but only intention to satisfy temporarily the desires of the other party.

Mr. Weatherhead expresses the belief that one reason for many an unhappy marriage is not the divergence caused by the

arrival of babies; but the unhappiness caused through their non-arrival.[1.]

In discussing marriages which are involuntarily childless Havelock Ellis observes that divorce may be a legitimate solution for those who regard children of first importance but it is not a welcome solution. The second marriage may be more unhappy than the first and may likewise be unfruitful. He also says that

> "Married people who wish for divorce because they have no children usually, if the full truth were known, wish to be divorced because they feel incompatible. So for them the problem of childlessness is really part of a larger problem." 2.

Having children in the home is complicated by the problem of sterility. It has been estimated that approximately ten percent of all modern civilized marriages are sterile.[3.] While the wife has usually been held responsible for infertile marriages, actual studies show that the difficulty is as likely to be with the husband as the wife. Dr. Dickinson found that involuntary sterility was one of the most frequent reasons for which patients came to him.[4.] The causes of sterility are many but the most frequent single cause in men is chronic gonorrhea.

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1. Weatherhead, L. D., The Mastery of Sex Through Psychology and Religion, p. 73
2. Ellis, Havelock, Psychology of Sex, p. 300
3. Popenoe, Paul, The Conservation of the Family, p. 95
4. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 246

Dr. Exner gives

> "children as the major shared interest of the marital partners"

as one of the positive factors that enter into a successful marriage.[1.]

Professor Elmer reminds us

> "While this group is more complete and richer in all its possible developments where the family consists of parents and children, that where there are no children the family group may reach at least a partial fulfillment. A very considerable number of families which are not privileged, or who do not desire, to have children may still maintain and develop a wholesome and happy companionate marriage." 2.

There seems to be nothing definite as to the part childlessness plays in marital difficulties. In some instances it may be the contributing cause and in other cases it may be a basic cause. On the other hand, children frequently become a disrupting influence in the marriage. Where disharmony exists for other reasons, children often become the center of disagreements and irritations.

It is interesting to note that in 1928 in over 60 percent of the divorces granted in the United States there were no children.[3.]

Relatives-in-Law

Relatives are notoriously troublesome to the newly married. It is a matter of common observation that some marriage

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1. Exner, M. J., The Sexual Side of Marriage, p. 248
2. Elmer, Manuel Conrad, Family Adjustment and Social Change, p. 128
3. Ibid, p. 165

failures have their origin or a contributing factor in the interference of a mother-in-law or the over-dependence of the husband or wife on the mother.

Difficulties arising over relatives are natural and understandable; especially is this true in tensions between parents-in-law and the young couple. The marriage of a child means to parents the breaking away from a relationship usually maintained since childhood. For the young couple it means a new intimacy in which previous associations must be pushed somewhat in the background. It is not strange that difficulty is sometimes encountered in establishing a new status.

The dominance of a mother that was accepted up until the time of marriage may be resented by the child after marriage. The child-in-law is likely to resent any dominance and become hostile. Misunderstandings are apt to follow and a tension develop between the young couple which may become the basis of a permanent separation of interest.

Although difficulties may arise with any relative, as the over-dependence on a brother, sister, aunt, uncle or an interference by any of these, the mother-in-law is most often blamed for in-law troubles. However, there are all kinds of mothers-in-law, but the troublesome ones have given color to the rest. The mother-in-law interference often arises because the mother has failed to develop outside interests while she was busy rearing a family. Consequently when marriage

takes a child from the home, a void is left which the mother attempts to fill by giving too much attention to the child's affairs.

The fault is not all on one side. The bride or groom may be over-sensitive or unreasonably touchy. The young couple may fail to understand that the relatives must go through a process of adjustment to the new relation created by the marriage as well as the bride and groom.

As far as living with relatives is concerned, it seems in the main to be a dangerous undertaking. Dr. Frank Crane gives as one of the rules for a happy marriage, "Live by yourselves," for the problems of adjustment can be more easily worked out alone.[1.]

Professor Groves believes that the quickest way for a parent to ruin the chances of the happiness for a newly married child is to force the new family to live with the old. In some cases such a plan has succeeded but the chances are against its success.[2.]

However, the commonness of the in-law incompatibility must not be interpreted to mean that the relationship is in itself mischievous. There is reason to believe that the majority of those who pass through it, meet it successfully.

Jealousy

One of the enemies of love is jealousy which is usually the result of childish habits that have never been out-grown

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1. Crane, Dr. Frank, Quoted in "Harmony in Marriage," p. 4
2. Groves, E. R., Wholesome Marriage, p. 120-121

or cast aside. It is a complex of fear, humiliation, anger, doubt, resentment, and hatred. It is often aroused because of a feeling of inferiority, or it may be caused by social suggestions, as literature, moving pictures, or the social attitude which seems to consider jealousy as a necessary accompaniment of affection.

Dr. Ramus explains jealousy as wounded self-love, wounded vanity and confessed inferiority. It is always a sign of loss of confidence and loss of power.[1.]

The social attitude that assumes an unreasonable concentration of husband and wife may be the provoking cause of jealousy. Professor Groves cites the case of two educated people in middle life thoroughly fond of one another who had a marriage crisis because the man courteously offered to accompany one of his wife's intimate friends to a lecture the wife was unable to attend.[2.] This socially forced isolation in contrast to premarital freedom may cause jealousies and unreasonable tension which may lead to marriage restlessness and even to sex antipatny between the husband and wife.

Another common cause of jealousy is the out-of-the-home success of the wife. Such jealousy is the result of inferiority feeling and is most apparent when the wife's earning power is greater than the husband's or when her reputation approaches or surpasses that of the husband. Such a jealousy

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1. Ramus, Carl, Marriage and Eficiency, p. 95
2. Groves, E. R., The Marriage Crisis, p. 219

may become so intense as to necessitate the wife's giving up the work outside the home or destroy domestic harmony even to bringing about a divorce if the wife insists on her rights as she conceives them.

Jealousy may be manifested upon the arrival of the first child in the home when the husband may feel that too much of the wife's affection is transferred to the child.

There is no question about jealousy having a place in family incompatibilities, but whatever the cause, the amount of jealousy aroused in any person is in direct proportion to the amount of self-love and vanity which are present.

An Obstacle to Ambition

A situation that leads to incompatibility comes about when a husband or wife seems to the other an obstacle to ambition. There are many ways by which one of the partners comes to be an obstacle to the happiness of the other.

Persuading a young woman to leave her education uncompleted for marriage is frequently hazardous. Even when the marriage is apparently happy, there may be regret that prevents the relationship from attaining the success that might have been possible had the marriage been postponed until education was completed.

The danger to marriage happiness is even greater when a premature marriage means that the man must discontinue his education, drop a line of business, or move from some advantageous environment. At the time the sacrifice may seem

normal, but in after years it is apt to become a source of regret when it is realized how much it has stunted the man's career and financial success.

Ill-Advised Marriages

There are marriages consummated for which disruption is a foregone conclusion. Such unions may be classified under various types. One of these is the marriage of persons too young to recognize the significance of the act or to know their own minds. Another is the hasty marriage entered into before the couple is sufficiently acquainted. A third is the marriage of those physically or mentally unfit because of disease or defect. Other such ill-advised marriages are "forced" marriages, marriage for money, and those based on only romantic love.

Other Causes

There are numerous other causes all of which are related to factors already discussed which may under various circumstances lead to disharmony where certain personalities are concerned.

One of these is the case in which one of the marriage partners ceases to grow and remains stationary while the other continues to develop and progress. This leads to a separation in interests and an ever widening breach.

The tendency of either husband or wife to exploit the other is a common marriage difficulty. This occurs when one is more affectionate and sacrificing than the other. If such

a condition does not last, when the relationship becomes more normal there may be on the part of the person who received the sacrifice the feeling that the other's affection has weakened. There is a tendency for the one who gives to develop except so far as judgment is concerned while the other becomes unfair, selfish, and childish.

Likewise, long periods of separation, lack of permanent settlement, and moral separation between the husband and wife may be contributing factors to marital maladjustment.

PART IV

CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

This study has revealed to the writer one thing above all others, that is, the complexity of the causes of marital maladjustment.

Marriage is but one sphere of human relations in which changes are rapidly occuring. We find the same thing true in the economic, religious, international, political, and moral life.

With the lessening of external pressures in conforming marriages to a definite pattern, their stability increasingly is coming to depend on a personal adaption and adjustment of the husband and wife. This means that marriage is becoming more adaptable to changing conditions and is undergoing various modifications, although as an institution it is probably as secure as ever because of its place in fulfilling basic human needs.

In collecting the material for the paper, the writer has been impressed that each case of domestic discord is unique in itself and is a product of numerous elements in various degrees and combinations. The causes of marital unhappiness cannot be resolved into specific, isolated categories; but result from the development of tensions between husbands and

wives growing out of a diversity and complexity of conflict situations.

The writer fully realizes this study is inadequate for any conclusions. However, the personal impression formed in consulting the authorities is that the two most prevalent causes of marital maladjustment are the very general and inclusive factors of childhood conditioning and sex difficulties which in themselves are inter-dependent.

Just as Wellington won the battle of Waterloo in his games on the field of Eton, so it appears that many marriage difficulties originate in the days of childhood. Especially is this true in the realm of sex where childhood experiences like ghostly hands reach up out of the dead past to choke and frustrate the normal expression and powers of sexual love.

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